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DECEMBER, 1916

No. 4



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The Magazine That's Read in the Pullman.

PITTSBURGH

By Henry Hugh Hunt

WOMEN in parti-colored wraps, and men in top hats and overcoats which revealed their silk-clad legs grotesquely, emerged from their limousines and swept up the broad marble steps of the city's most exclusive club. It was the

night of the Colonial ball.

Upstairs, in one of the dressing-rooms, a man stood prinking before a mirror. He subdued the ruddy color of his face with talcum, and placed a black beauty-patch beneath his left eye. His white wig glistened. As he turned away, he was, in his gold-brocaded coat, lace ruffles, white satin breeches and white silk stockings, an exquisite reproduction of eighteenth-century elegance.

Deftly removing from his mouth a good-sized chew of tobacco, and dropping

it gracefully into a jardiniere, he departed for the ball-room.



COMME IL FAUT

By Dorney Gibbs

SHE is a charming coquette.
She smokes her cigarette daintily.
She sips her cocktail gracefully.
She dances like a nymph.
She plays a wonderful game of golf.
I love to spend my week-ends with her—
She is my grandmother.

THE MAN IN THE STREET

By George Seay Wheat

THE tall man had a good strong arm. Consequently, when he beat the drum he obtained so much noise out of it that had its makers known its potentialities they would probably have tacked a few dollars more onto the price. The short man, playing the trombone, had apparently unlimited lung power, for he made his instrument heard above the drum, while the slender woman, unable to compete with her tambourine, raised her voice above the other instruments and fairly shrieked to the Lord.

The tune was "Tipperary." But it was for no Irish haven that these persons longed, nor did they wail to behold a winsomely sweet colleen. They wanted to go to Heaven and to see none other than God Almighty Himself.

It's a long way to get to Heaven,
It's a long way to God,
It's a long way to get to Heaven
If the righteous path be trod;
Goodbye cards and women,
Farewell whiskey breath;
It's a long, long way to get to Heaven,
And the wage of Sin is death.

When the song was finished the crowd on the curb was able to hear an elevated train go crashing by and the noise of passing motors was noticeable. The tall man was telling why his arm was so strong. He had been a prize-fighter and had beaten many famous ring champions, he said, with latent pride. But such things were earthly and even as naught compared with beating a drum for the Lord.

I saw the Man in the Street smile and so did the prize-fighter. "You'd better come along," said the latter to the man as he pointed his drum stick toward Heaven. Then he gave the drum a solar plexus. It was a signal. The horn blasted, the drum shivered and groaned and roared again and the woman shrieked—this time for the Sweet Fields of Eden.

The Man in the Street walked away. He took the direction in which I, too, was bound. A few hundred paces and the din was less. He jerked his arm toward the noise and smiling laconically said:

"Wouldn't it be a joke on them if there wasn't any God?"



E ACH day, on arising, empty a goblet of ice water over your heart and stick a red rose in your brain.



ON the Tree of Knowledge, Good and Evil, there hang a great many nuts.



THE SUPERLATIVE MASCULINE

By G. Vere Tyler

CHAPTER I

AY back, long ago, Mr. Stanwood Lamarque claimed as ancestor a Russian violinist of great renown, but he was not concerned about his ancestry except for an occasional secret satisfaction with its subtly intellectual and artistic bestowments. He was concerned, and that vitally, with himself, and with everything connected with his own life.

With little or no heart, and yet with a keen, almost passionate, appreciation of a highly wrought sentimental; with a rare consciousness that combined the sagacity of a thoroughbred animal and the acquired wisdom of a savant; by nature a cynic, through conviction a scoffer, the subconscious in people became arrested, in fact, often quailed before his egotistic poise and electric projection.

Having found humanity invariably disappointing and yet more interesting than anything else he had delved into outside his profession, that of an architect (and Mr. Lamarque was a very renowned architect on both continents) he thought it diverting not to be unsociable. Nor was he unpopular. A brilliant man, who has nothing to ask of mankind except that it behave in his presence, and show off to the best of its ability, who can provoke latent originality in even a bootblack, rarely is.

As to women, he could not conceive of any one interfering with either their moral or unmoral purposes, their simply living themselves out, temperamentally, in such a manner as orchids or roses or pansies or sweet peas. The most horrible object that his mind could con- at the hour of death, guardian of his

ceive was an employed woman. Their sole occupation should be the cultivation of interesting idleness—how to recline, how to stand, how to use the body, how to charm through the hands or the eyes. The habitual woman, the woman controlled by duty, obedience to custom, and especially the woman who labored, was to him the real sinner among them. Exaggeration in all things pertaining to them, especially in officious indolence and in costumes unblushingly designed to invite the consideration of the opposite sex, awakened his admiration, even his applause. He knew such very good and by good he meant, of course, charming—bad women, and such bad by bad he meant stupid—good women, that it was impossible, as far as he was concerned, not to knock the standards regarding them into a cocked hat.

All women who had the courage to liberate themselves into the domain of charm, charmed him. Through them he found, far and above other considerations, an outlet for his secretly clamoring æstheticism. In fact, if Mr. Lamarque could have fallen a victim to any one thing, it would have been to feminine charms. He knew his weakness, knew it perfectly well, and went among them as his dear friend Nietzsche-Mr. Lamarque regarded Nietzsche his very dearest friend-had declared every man should, with a whip. He kept them at a distance.

It was this apparent sex aloofness, together with his integrity as a man of affairs, and, under all circumstances, outwardly cool head, that had caused the senior partner of the firm of Livingston and Lamarque to appoint him, motherless daughter Vivian, and her wealth. He had found the position a responsible one, but not without satisfying compensations. He was only twelve years older than his ward. What more natural than that he should look forward to strengthening their position

by a holier tie?

We thus find Mr. Lamarque—we trust by now, an admittedly interesting personality—seated one late afternoon in the unpromising month of April, cigar lightly held between slender dark fingers, in a favorite club corner in conversation with a friend. This friend—the newly made managing director of a big moving picture concern—had just informed him that he was leaving New York the next afternoon for a couple of years' sojourn in California. To be cordial in this case was nothing else, in the eyes of a person particular about such things, than to be polite.

"My dear Sargent," he was remarking pleasantly—their talk had drifted far—"I can't altogether agree with you. An intellectual conscience and a religious conscience are two very different matters. An intellectual conscience may be both plastic and pliable—it may even stretch its dictated acts almost any length whatsoever, but, of course, not

beyond good taste!"

"While a religious conscience—"

"My own dear boy, the idea is too horrible to discuss. It suggests a brick fence, in my opinion—you may say my profession influences me—the most hideous thing in the world!"

"I quite agree with you, but, after all, why have any conscience at all?"

"I quite agree with you!" and Mr. Lamarque vouchsafed his rare smile and dazzling teeth quite inoffensively.

As though the perfection of the latter may have provoked it, the other rather irrelevantly extended an invitation to dinner.

"I should like nothing better," Mr. Lamarque answered pleasantly enough, "but I am expecting the return of my ward this evening. She has been spending the winter in Florida."

"Not, I hope," matching Mr. La-

marque's pleasant smile, "for the sake of her health?"

"By no means. Physically she is beyond reproach, the most absolutely splendid creature—I almost said animal—I have ever had the good fortune to meet. Have you never seen her?"

"Only at a distance, but I quite agree with you. I thought her extravagantly

superb."

"I am indebted to you for your manner of defining her. She is that—extravagantly superb! In fact, it isn't pushing it too far to say that she appears to have been fashioned by the Great and Almighty Artist to cause a sensation, the same kind that the work of some famous artist might, when he has done something entirely out of the ordinary, something sufficiently remarkable to cause the beholder, on first sight, to catch his breath."

"That is about what happened to me when I saw her one night in the lobby of the Metropolitan Opera House. She struck me as being violently alive, even to the point of being startlingly—as you

said—sensational."

"And this effect," took up Mr. Lamarque, "is alike upon all, a sense of bewilderment over her supernatural, or rather, over-abundant charm. In my opinion she marks an epoch in human perfection."

Through the over-yellow light caused by the sunset reflection that stole through a window, it seemed for the especial purpose of his lighting up, his

companion studied him.

"I didn't know, Lamarque, that you could ever become so enthusiastic!"

"That is because, my dear fellow, you do not know me. I can become anything!"

"Surely," he felt his way cautiously,

"not a husband!"

"Even that. Marriage in the ordinary acceptance of the idea is absurd, revolting, in fact, but the opportunities afforded a husband should not be overlooked, at least once in a life-time, be the man no end of a cynic—in fact, a man like yourself!"

"Oh! I am not a cynic."

"The most delightful one of my ac-

quaintance, Sargent."

Mr. Sargent knew how to receive and yet ignore a compliment and went on: "Town Topics and the social columns are constantly uniting you and your ward in those same holy bonds. If I may make so bold—you don't mind, do you?—why, since you approve, the de-

lay?"

"As a part of the pleasure. Delay is an important element, or should be, in all great happenings. I believe in nature's plan: that we should plant an idea, wait patiently for it to come up, watch it grow, bloom, drop its bloom, become fruit, and then—not until wholly ripe though—eat. My ward is the idea that I have held in just that way! Beside, as a part of my duty to her I should not claim a monopoly of her charms too early in the game. She is by nature as lawless as she is resplendent; it entertains me to give her rope."

"How long has she been away?"

"Four months."

"You are not afraid of some more ardent and less conscientious rival?"

"I am afraid of many, and therein lies the excitement of my waiting—the opportunity to do away with them!"

His companion laughed.

"Florida," he remarked suspiciously, "is a long way off!"

Mr. Lamarque laughed too.

"Why, my dear Sargent, you don't for a moment suppose I have allowed her to remain a target for fortune hunters and sentimentalists for four months without having her watched?"

"Watched?"

"Certainly, while giving her full rein, up to a certain point, of course, to do exactly as she likes, even to riding astride an alligator. Nothing, in my estimation, is more cruel than curtailing the natural bent of temperamental inclinations. It is quite as cruel as the old Chinese idea of dwarfing the foot, a custom that not only causes excruciating pain but makes the foot hideous and distorts its purpose. How many heroic souls are cramped just like that, and ruined for life's pleasant experi-

ences! I want my ward to follow all her inclinations, be herself to the very limit of discretion, as long as she doesn't in the end escape falling into my hands!"

"For keeps!" laughed Sargent.

"I don't even say that, for exploitation and whatever happens felicitous or otherwise—in marriage one must be prepared for anything—to come out of it!"

"Upon my word, Lamarque, you are really refreshing—you make me doubt my departure from New York even in the pursuit of gold, because, of course, your like can't be, at any rate on this side, encountered outside of New York!"

"On my part," returned Mr. Lamarque as they both rose, "I am sorry not to be able to dine with you, and I hope you will find your picture venture piling up the gold for you!"

They shook hands and parted.

CHAPTER II

Nothing could possibly be easier right here than to board the train bearing Mr. Lamarque's ward on her homeward journey and travel with her. We might even, with that easy egotistical complaisance of writers, profess to read and give forth her thoughts. All this would be easy sailing, except that a tiresome, though not perilous, accident had occurred to Miss Livingston's train which rather disturbed the lucidity of her thoughts, and which, in fact, diverted her mind to very commonplace trivialities. When it reached a small Virginia town (she had broken her trip to New York to stay over in that State a few days with a former school friend) after having crawled along for several miles, it came to a jolting halt, and the passengers were informed of a tiresome wait on account of a landslide ahead.

Miss Livingston, whose life train ran easily on the rails of wealth, who was indeed unused to tiresome waits of any kind, quite naturally resented this one. But beyond a few questions, followed by some moments of impatient pondering, she soon relapsed into her ordi-

nary outward composure.

While we may not, on account of a practical event that had proven disturbing, decipher and clearly disclose her thoughts of the moment, we can look upon her, the central figure-as she always was of any situation—of a mishap, and decide as to whether the two gentlemen who had so unblushingly discussed her at the club were warranted in their enthusiastic praise of her charms. It must, in our humble opinion, go without saying that they were. There was one thing about her, however, that neither of the gentlemen had commented upon, namely, that she was a being upon whom an experience had set its seal. It was not a damaging seal, and it in no way marred or detracted from her charm, but it was still there, as plainly there as the one white lock of hair that might, by some, be said to enhance, or at any rate, dazzlingly emphasize that charm. In looking upon her one saw distinctly both girl and woman: in other words a girl marked by an experience. She was seen distinctly through a veil of what had been. And yet, strangely enough, one had only to look long to see no veil at all, only resplendent girlhood, and to marvel at oneself for having questioned about her and not simply admired her.

The youthful experience that we have taken the liberty to refer to lay back of her now five years. It had descended upon her soon after the death of an adored mother, while she was in a somewhat weakened condition from shock, and travelling with her father for the sake of his own shattered health in Europe. Vivian often felt that her father's death soon after might have been hastened by this very unexpected experience, just as if he had come upon her suddenly lamed for life, and not been able to pull up from the shock.

Immediately upon her return home, an orphan, bearing the burden of a mistake, one that she in no way intended, however, should spell disaster for her, she selected an impoverished middleaged relative to conspicuously parade on occasions, and plunged headlong into society, to forget and begin anew.

Nothing is more uplifting than to see a beautiful ship thus right itself after a fierce storm, gayly fly its slightly damaged flag and bravely sail straight for its port. So we see Vivian in that little Virginia town with not a single thought of disaster in her—not even a light disturbance showing ahead! Nor would her cheerful calculations, her beautiful belief in her future plain sailing be the least unwarranted, had she not out of that consideration which is so often the undoing of fine characters, decided to send a telegram to alleviate any anxiety on account of her delayed arrival home.

And just here with all the callousness of the movie camera man, who deliberately shifts our interests at the very moment of arousing it, we flash our light upon another individual, also delayed in this sad-looking Virginia town, by the afore-mentioned landslide.

Meet Mr. Kendall Randolph Light-

foot, of Norfolk.

If Miss Livingston could be conceived of as an inspiration of the Almighty, Mr. Lightfoot might be conceived of as presented, by that same Deity, to humanity as a pattern. It was—how shall it be adequately described?—the kind of delicately chaste beauty that one associates with an antique, a crowned perfection of no age.

Mr. Lightfoot himself made no denial of the gift; in fact, he lived in the consciousness of it. It must be said for him that while at times there was satisfaction in this consciousness, there were other times when it wearied him, like some rare possession that one is so situated as to have no use for. For Mr. Lightfoot, styled by his associates Lightfoot, F. F. V. (which, of course, every one knows stands for First Families of Virginia) on account of the class to which he belonged, and a certain haughtiness of manner that betrayed itself against his will, was none other-a whim of the fates-than a very poor and struggling young lawyer. It was the lamentable fact of his poverty that occupied him as he stood moodily in the doorway of the station of the small Virginia town, watching a suddenly animated shower while curbing his restlessness as to his delayed train.

For some reason, on this particular morning, it seemed absurd to be thus artistically fashioned and, at the same time, tied to the treadmill of commonplace and unsuccessful endeavor. His somewhat sad and derisive smile developed into a frozen look that hardened his features, and finally, with another glance at himself, through a mental eye, a low bitter laugh escaped him. This beauty, finding in him such accentuation of a family bestowal, this ever present rarefied reflection of a peculiar inheritance, was half absurd. It was never in the right setting, but always, as it were, vulgarly framed, thus making him, as the possessor of it, doubly conspicuous and open to comment. Men chaffed him about it; he was annoyed by women.

Finally his thoughts shifted to the case that had brought him to the little country town. "Bah!" he finally uttered irritably, "railroads and suits against them for killed cows!" But he lived, and through him others, upon these very things! He mustn't forget that.

He almost spoke the final words aloud. They were drowned by the engine letting off steam, and by a rather senseless, from his standpoint, shifting of the train a few yards forward. Quite naturally his eye fell upon the coach that, thus shifted, blocked his view, and a moment later upon a rather anxious, but also, without doubt, ravishingly beautiful face that appeared at the window.

The face belonged to Vivian, of course, Vivian whom Mr. Lamarque had made the fatal mistake of not having watched on the train as well as off. Before he could fasten her gaze, focus it upon himself, she had disappeared—only to reappear, however, on the platform of the coach with that same anxious expression, as though—for just so

do the fates arrange — in search of someone.

Mr. Lightfoot, invariably polite to ladies, and also over-ready to note an opportunity for adventure, could not be expected to fail to take advantage of this one.

"Can I be of service to you?" he asked in his charming voice, quite in harmony with his captivating features.

Naturally, as he spoke, he had stepped forward, and, having lifted his traveling cap, for the brief fraction of an instant, was giving her the benefit not only of the beautiful silky dark hair that adorned his shapely head and that even curled after the manner of gods, but a glimpse of the famous and, as a matter of fact,—the history of his ancestors affirmed this,—dangerous Lightfoot smile. It, together with the unusual appearance of Lightfoot, F. F. V., went home, as Vivian's quick flush and hesitation affirmed.

Nevertheless, a moment later, in a voice as charming, and it might be affirmed quite as musical as his own Southern one, she replied somewhat brightly, if not startlingly, "I should like to send a telegram!"

She then, as it were, making no bones of it, paused again to gaze in rapt wonderment at the marvelous face.

It must be said for Mr. Lightfoot that he was so used to this kind of recognition that it in no way disconcerted him.

"If you will allow me to I will send it for you at once," he exclaimed a bit eagerly.

Springing to the platform, he offered her his note-book with a pencil, and while she wrote the message, pressing the book to the door of the coach, and thus offering her profile, he felt as one awakening from a dream. When she turned suddenly and handed him the book with her written message, and a crisp bill that she had taken from a gold handbag, a flush that matched her own of a moment before sprang becomingly to his face, and he went to do her bidding as though a great honor had been conferred upon hm. He was not slow

in returning with her change. She had re-entered the coach, and with her mind probably at rest as to the sending of her message, had leaned her head against the blue velvet that decorated her chair and closed her eyes.

Lightfoot, F. F. V., certainly hesitated to disturb the lovely picture, but his eager glance of admiration caused her to almost instantly open her eyes and

meet his.

"I ordered them to rush it through," he exclaimed with no diminution of the former eagerness in his voice, while he answered her faint smile with a bright one, and did not fail to note the glance of astonished wonder repeated in her eyes as they lingered on his.

"You must be sorely tried by this tiresome delay," he ventured to remark.

"I am," she admitted simply.

"These railroad mishaps are extremely annoying," he continued, adding tentatively: "Wouldn't you like to go outside for a breath of air? There is a covered platform under which you could walk."

"I should like it very much," she an-

swered, rising as one in a dream.

Having reached the platform, they were pleased to discover that the animated shower of a few moments ago had changed to a smoky drizzle, and that through one breaking cloud the sun, like a small scythe cutting the gloom, gave a ray of cheer. Breakfast hour approaching, the town-people had vanished and the station was tranquil. The light from the engine shed a green glow on a pool of water ahead. The rain still fell, but the sun, after a moment of fierce wrestling behind the clouds, suddenly burst forth and shone out radiantly. The raindrops glistened on things and the earth actually sparkled.

"How wonderful!" exclaimed Vivian, pausing at the end of the platform to look out. "How seldom we privileged beings," she added as she turned buoyantly to her companion, "ever see the early morning. It has stopped raining. Shall we walk over to that lovely

field?"

"You are not afraid of the dampness?" Mr. Lightfoot reminded, noting her thin shoes and also, it must be admitted, her lovely feet.

She laughed. "Not in the least! Are those plum or peach trees in bloom?"

She was eagerly bright as she stepped from the platform to the centre of the track in front of the engine. A moment later, with a radiant, half-mischievous smile over her shoulder, she ran with the gayety of a child to the centre of the field she had admired. Pausing suddenly, she lifted her head and gazed in ecstasy about her.

To Lightfoot, F. F. V., her radiant face seemed unnatural. She was like some vivid, palpitating spirit dropped from the wondrous light. He could only think of her-others had before him—as bewildering. His bewilderment, unexpected and even staggering, left him speechless. Somewhat breathlessly he watched her, as without breaking a blissful silence she lifted a hand and pointed to a departing redbird, cutting like fire through the glory of the early spring morning. He had never seen anything like the look in her eyes as she watched the bird-never, in fact, had seen anyone like her in any respect. While she suggested to him an impression that he could only define as angelic, it was the angelic in flames. She began to fire his imagination. She might be—for he, too, got a momentary glimpse of the veil—some modern Boadicea, making ready to spring into her chariot of war.

Presently she turned, and as though following some bitter memory, mingled with a new and inspirational thought, fixed her luminous, sea-purple, gold-tinted eyes on his. There was no reservation in this glance. It was bold and assured and spoke volumes. It told him just how he appeared to her; told him far more plainly than words that the present scene would never fade for her, and that it would exist thus because he was the central figure of it.

It did not tell him—as Mr. Lamarque could have done—that nothing was more natural, less extraordinary than

that this very thing should happen; that it only required the presence of the physically ideal, coupled with the unknown, an adventure, in fact, to cause the long-repressed romantic and passionate in her to burst into bloom. But while it did not tell him these things, he read placidly the other-that she was fascinated by him, nor did the knowledge abash him. To thus charm a woman on first sight was an old story to him. But what perplexed and baffled Mr. Lightfoot-what made the world and her and himself differentwas that he was charmed, and that entirely apart from the usual intent. He wanted to tell her this, offer her in return for what she had offered, this entirely new kind of feminine homage that had so suddenly come to him. He felt that similar words were surging in her heart—burning on her lips. . . . But neither spoke; each gazed, as though lost in wonder, into the eyes of the other. . .

Presently a sharp blast from the engine whistle caused them both to start.

"That is your train," he exclaimed, putting out his hand to her, "you must run!"

"Is it not yours?"

"No. I go in the opposite direc-

"Ah!" And a pallor that he was to become familiar with spread over her face. . .

CHAPTER III

On her arrival home it seemed to Vivian that she was entering upon new rather than familiar scenes. It produced a shock. Ever since she had taken her parting glimpse of her sud-denly discovered Apollo, through the blurred window-pane of her coach, she had relied upon her arrival home to restore her equilibrium.

She had reached this familiar environment now, but for some reason there was no response. On the other hand, she seemed to, most mysteriously, find herself in a strange, altogether new, Glancing absently about the

spacious hall, she dismissed the servants and entered the drawing-room affected by the peculiar silence of things. Why did not music sound, and everything begin to tremble and move? A moment later she smiled at this fantastical reasoning and passed the back of her hand impatiently across her eyes as she succumbed to the admission that she was not yet capable of thought. Apparently all that she could do was to feel, give herself up to the wonderful feeling that had so unexpectedly come to her, just as she so often gave herself up to music when a great opera was being performed. She felt excited,

poised for great heights.

It was just this kind of oblivion, this rising into the realms of recklessness, a condition that held all the stimulation of strong drink and rendered one capable of indifference to the prescribed facts of existence, that Vivian had been waiting for, waiting for for five years, ever since the time she had felt like this before! Her mind, in a kind of spasm, reverted to that other moment when she had thus felt poised, indifferent to consequences. For a moment the other experience was upon her, standing out like a lightning-blighted pine tree touched by moonlight. She paled, but habit made it possible to dismiss the thought. She put her unknown hero of the morning in front of the tragic vision, and as she did so a bit of a nervous laugh escaped her. The fascination of him had caused the other dream. her girlhood's dream, to fade. Vivian breathed a deep sigh as one emerging from long torture and dropped to a seat. After a while she remembered that the identity of the one who had inspired such overwhelming emotions was unknown to her. It was as though a meteor had flashed across the heavens and disappeared. But Vivian had hope that the meteor would reappear.

Having made sure of not being disturbed by a message to her relative that she was tired from her journey and would see her in the morning, she rang

for her maid.

The girl, who had never understood

her mistress' whim to send her home ahead of her when she stopped over in Virginia—which whim was due to Vivian's desire not to embarrass by apparent—to such simple people—ostentation, appeared instantly, full of ill-concealed joy and solicitude. The girl's beaming face and solicitous attitude reflected, rather than herself, her mistress, for Vivian was one of those rare ones whom to serve was to love.

She returned the pretty little French girl's greeting with unaffected friendliness and then clapped her hands: "Go, Marie," she exclaimed, "and light the

studio!"

The girl flew on light feet to do her bidding. Vivian, however, again suddenly thoughtful, mounted the two flights of stairs slowly, as one in a

dream.

The large hall on the top floor, designated the studio for want of a better name, had been planned and contrived by her as a place to retire to, shut out the world, and capture her dreams. There were so many palms and flowers that it more nearly resembled a conservatory. She could light up trees and flowers, according to her mood, and the ceiling, which was of azure blue, could in one second flash with stars or at will a full, three-quarter, or crescent, moon.

"Light anything and everything, Marie," she exclaimed, suddenly awake again. "I want the lights to clash and

blind me to-night!"

"Mademoiselle will not then go to the bed?" curiously inquired Marie.

"The bed! No, not for a month, Ma-

rie!" and she laughed.

Catching her mistress' mood, Marie flew about, touching buttons, each moment producing some new and strange effect. Large bunches of red roses seemed to catch fire, violets glowed in weird purple, lilies became translucent. Finally, when the entire place was like a garden on fire, and the ceiling was lit with stars surrounding a pale, full moon, the girl stood expectant.

"Now," exclaimed her mistress, with another exultant laugh, as she strode towards and through scarlet portières at the extreme end of the hall, "come and undress me, and then dress me to stay awake!"

A little later, re-entering through the glowing curtains, she stood alone in the languor and sensuous tranquillity of fiery flowers eager for further imagina-

tive flights.

Could Mr. Kendall Randolph Lightfoot have seen her now, he would probably never have recognized her; he might even, in fact, have stood aghast

at the vision she presented.

The pale gray loosely belted traveling coat of the early morning, together with the close-fitting turban of the same spiritual shade, had given her a saintlike look that she most certainly no longer possessed. The shapely feet that he had admired were now in scarlet heelless slippers, and wrapped about her was an Oriental lounge robe of deep purple upon which yellow flowers were embroidered in silks that seemed to blaze. As she moved about, her body, freed of stays, betrayed slow, graceful movements, and there seemed surging within her a restlessness that she found both agreeable and disturb-

Pausing suddenly in the yellow glow of a bunch of tiger lilies, one might imagine that the wealth of slightly curling, unbound, disheveled hair that she shook back had been dipped in blood that had dried on it and become dulled to a russet brown. This strange hair, in the sunlight, could change to pure copper and gold. Her moods were often evinced in her manner of arranging it. As a rule, lightly held, it was given full play to arrange itself. There were times when her face appeared from out its tangled meshes as from reddish yellow flames. She delighted in this strange, violently colored hair as in unique possession, the crown of an unusual personality, and trained it to produce effects. Her body, supple and undulating, had all the slow, easy grace of tigresses whose movements she studied, and it was covered with skin as delicate in texture as the leaf of a tea rose, or yellow satin in the candlelight. Her hands and arms, her feet and limbs, bust and shoulders, received from her all the consideration Mr. Lamarque considered a woman should give these things. Her features, mobile and accurately proportioned, were both holy and blasphemous. The entire face was graphic, often half lost in the luminosity of emotions that played upon it, or affected by the lights or shadows that fell upon her hair. Only the eyes were steadfast. A quiet ocean-like purple, full of gold, they shone in her head like

giant stars in the sky.

Presently, as though at a loss, she began a restless tour about the place, touching lightly the artificial flowers, or breathing deeply the fragrance of natural ones. Sometimes she would break one from its stem and toss it upwards with cruel indifference, as though she alone, of God's many perfections, counted. That was quite natural to her. Things were ever sacred and not sacred, and in this moment she was conscious of a sense of blasphemy born of her own strength. Suddenly she paused, and giving the scintillating russet hair a rough shaking, flung up her arms and stood quite a while motionless as a statue. Then she began moving about again, assuming strange positions and attitudes, sometimes triumphant, sometimes sensuous; one moment flinging herself in voluptuous abandonment on a couch, the next leaping to her feet as though startled. And all the while her eyes were glowing and she was repeating in a low voice: "The field, the sky, the tree, the blossoms, the bluebird perched upon the top, the-"

"Vivian!"

CHAPTER IV

It was her guardian, Mr. Stanwood Lamarque, who had thus unconven-

tionally intruded upon her.

Having reached her with that pronounced grace that even those most familiar with him never failed to remark, a grace in itself remarkable, in his suave manner he requested her to pardon the intrusion—if she considered it such.

"I have been calling here all day!" he added, manifesting a slightly piqued dissatisfaction. And then more graciously, quite as though she still held her pardon in the hollow of her lovely hand, he continued: "When I saw your lights up here I fought my way in! I regret that I have to inform you that I was compelled to murder Marie on

the landing below!"

It was all so familiar to her, the familiarity of his position as guardian—the privileges it gave—the graceful approach, the highly cultured voice, the half-satirical manner of speech, the play of the eyes, and the cynical smile with which he so well concealed the passion of his nature, and that revealed, in their dazzling perfection, his cruel teeth.

Conscious of the subtle yet tremendous appeal of him, conscious of her instant surrender to the very things her own frankly buoyant nature resented, she grew suddenly wearied, and stood hesitating to speak, as one stands before an arduous task, beyond one's strength, yet that must be taken up.

He saw it, saw it plainly, as a dull pallor spread over her face and her great glowing eyes sought his helplessly. And it must be said for Mr. Lamarque, who could give his finer feelings play up to any given point he might decide upon, that he felt a bit sorry for her. She was so wholly his from his own viewpoint, so wholly not his from hers—he was not unconscious of her attitude towards him, now or at any time—that while he was pleasurably sorry for her, it was the kind of sorrow one indulges in at the play when one finds the hero temporarily submerged and at a discount!

"Why have you arrived so late?" he asked solicitously, as she failed to speak and merely stood, rather blankly, staring at him.

"An accident, a landslide, that de-

layed my train!"

Mr. Stanwood Lamarque, whose

powers of intuition quickly scented "something," was suspicious. He treated her to one of his characteristic smiles, one that she knew perfectly well was a smile of suspicion. A smile it was, too, that told her quite plainly that he knew full well all the danger of her, danger as far as her deportment was concerned—that he was perfectly aware that she was capable of kicking out of the traces to jump a fence into any kind of a field that happened to invite her. It was quite as though a vision of Mr. Kendall Randolph Lightfoot had appeared before him.

"Yes?" he inquired, referring to the delayed train. And then, with mock deference, "You pardon my coming upon you in these sacred precincts of

yours at so late an hour?"

"You know that I pay no attention to hours!" She put out her hand. "I am very glad to see you, Tanny," using the name her baby lips had framed for him.

"I am not so sure of that," he returned, now giving her a smile that she distinctly felt touch her lips, so that she quickly laid her fingers over them, as from a sting. As quickly he took them down.

"I thought you would never return," he added, bending to her. "What kept you there so long?"

A tinge of color came to her cheeks. "I liked it—there!" she exclaimed.

"Liked what, Vivian?"

"Why," she paused, and then rather burst forth, "many things—everything! Such spring sunlight, such flowers, such perfumes on the night air, such—!"

She paused.

"And" — he also paused — "what else?"

She sprang away from him with a somewhat hysterical laugh.

"Why," she exclaimed, "niggers!"

Mr. Stanwood Lamarque did not laugh. His features assumed a somewhat forbidding expression.

"Your subterfuge tells me you are not as ingenuous as you pretend to be, Vivian. You have not yet risen above the feminine defense of a lie!"

"Suppose it is so!" she retorted. "I

have no occasion to defend myself."
"You may find it necessary to defend yourself against me!"

"And why, pray?"

"Because I may open fire upon your resentment to include me in your life."

It was this kind of thing, this coldly assertive assurance on his part that never failed to cause her irritability. It was irritability that ran into anger now.

"I shall attempt to make your new rôle a difficult one!" she flashed.

"For which," he smiled, "I shall be your debtor. Only the difficult interests me! The trouble, though," he added significantly, "is that you are not capable of playing a difficult rôle. Yours is a nature so primitively frank that you carry your heart on your sleeve; your secrets are too easily read in your eyes! I shall always be able to steal your fires before you can set fire to my camp. In your opposition I shall find only stimulation. For instance," he paused a moment, "the fact that you are this moment thinking of another man only adds value to you in my eyes, as it would add fury to your passion were I to immediately indulge it. I happen to know, as, of course, you do not, that passion is enhanced by centering the imagination upon the one beyond reach. You would be very happy in my arms, Vivian!"

He let his eyes travel over her from the crown of her flaming head to the scarlet-shod feet, and she felt his gaze like the trailings of charged wires. When he smiled and significantly raised and lowered his lids, she drew back her hand to strike. Suddenly she controlled herself.

"I believe I hate you!" she remarked

calmly.

"I am sure that you do. You will hate me more. I will fan the flames of your hatred into burning fires, never sufficiently, though, to scorch myself—except pleasurably."

She gave a haughty laugh, but he

went on.

"Your fight against me has merely been all along a fight against surrender. While flattering yourself that you have been bravely holding out, you have really only been furtively awaiting the man who would be sufficiently strong to make you again-forget your-My observation of all this has been most interesting. As long as the man," and Mr. Lamarque smiled, "failed to show up I have been willing to watch your development, one that I felt sure must result in the marvelous -for me. You can rest assured, my dear Vivian, that I have never for one instant lost sight of my ultimate intention to possess you at, what seemed to me, the right moment."

He stood regarding her and for a moment she was staggered into merely

staring in his face.

"Because," he finally took up, "I have been deliberate about you, is no reason for you to doubt my ardor, Vivian. Whatever I do in this world will be deliberate. If I committed a murder it would be deliberate murder. I will commit love in the same way-with reason, calmly analyzing all its delights. But," he paused to fix a penetrating gaze in her eyes, "what I have set my heart upon no man shall take from me. You can't escape me, and," he partly closed his regular white teeth and gave his red mouth a twist calculated to repel yet charm, "you will respond to my passion for you!"

"That may be," she returned, grown white as the lilies beside which she stood, "there may be a part of my nature that you can control—I have never denied that even to myself. All things are possible between you and me except that you come between me and my dreams! I may wear my heart on my sleeve, my secrets may be revealed in my eyes, but they do not cloud my vision. That is as clear as yours, Tanny! You may stir my senses, fire my blood, you may even see me yield—I have yielded before—but I shall rise and escape to where you can't follow

me."

"I don't wish to, and it would be absurd if I did. No man has ever yet followed a woman into her dreams, and the woman never lived who did not live in dreams outside of her lover. It is that that holds him; he is jealous of that which can't include him. I, who wish to possess you, will find pleasure in all that! I already do possess you in the only way I care to. Shall I prove it to you, now, in the very moment that the dream you spoke of is resting upon another?"

Before she could prevent it, he caught up one of her hands, and with a quick, passionate, gesture placed his lips to its

palm.

"Good-night," he said quietly a moment later and turned and left her.

For a while, white from anger, Vivian stood as one petrified, gazing after him. Then she drew a deep breath and shielded her eyes. A moment later she began to prowl about, absently extinguishing lights and producing changing effects that she paused to linger upon. Finally only one bush of red roses was aglow. She looked long at this, and then with a quick gesture put out the light, leaving the place in darkness. She stood for quite a while thus, as shadowy as the flowers, enveloped in gloom. Finally making her way over to a window and drawing aside the heavy curtains she stood looking out.

The sky was dark and quiet; a full moon stared her in the face. Stepping back she put out her hands to it. Then turning quickly she switched into light a bunch of lilies that stood at the foot of a low couch. Flinging herself upon it she slept until the sun poured in and settled upon her like a yellow coverlet.

CHAPTER V

It was growing dark one day in the latter part of November; a little snow was falling and the lights were flashing through the gloom, when Mr. Kendall Randolph Lightfoot lit up, also, by his own beauty, dashed from the Grand Central Station into Broadway.

As he paused for a moment to collect himself, the street with its gloweyed flying vehicles, the new giant buildings with their haughty reach to the sky; the ancient dwarf ones apparently proud to be allowed to yet cling to the ground; the theatres and mammoth shops, all adopting some flagrant manner of attracting attention—the whole scene, in fact, both above and about him, seemed in violent motion.

Broadway loomed up before his eyes scattering broadcast lights that took form, and showing up humanity drunk upon these violent spasmodic forms, rabidly grasping at the life which they were supposed to represent. Here, within reach, was every comfort, every diversion, every temptation, that the human mind could conceive, and Mr. Kendall Randolph Lightfoot was excusable for the thrill that announced that he had, for a short while at any rate, the money to pay.

But back of our most joyous of moods, quite apart from the externals that have contributed to them, there is apt to be an underlying, even though unrecognized, thought, and Mr. Lightfoot was not wholly unmindful of the fact of his business trip to New York offering the possibility of a meeting with the illumined being of the early sunlit morning of the preceding spring.

As a matter of fact, if Vivian, as she undoubtedly had, had lived, as it were, upon thoughts of him, he had subsisted equally upon thoughts of her. seemed to him that scarcely a whole day had passed during which she had not presented her wonderful face for his consideration. This was, in fact, the very thought that filled his mind as he entered the dazzlingly lighted café of a modern Broadway hotel. After a satisfying glance at the assembled worldly throng he took his seat at a small table in a corner to more luxuriously give himself up to these very meditations. Having dispatched the waiter for a particular cocktail in vogue, one, he thought, calculated to inspire the boldness of a possibly unwarranted pursuit, he opened his evening paper and as luck would have it stared straight at the image of his dreams, a picture, in fact, of Vivian.

That our Mr. Lightfoot should catch

his breath, gulp with gusto the quickly arrived cocktail, and order another, is not surprising. These things did happen, and then the clear and altogether beautifully excited eyes of Mr. Lightfoot devoured the pictured face, nay more, the columns that announced that on this very evening Miss Vivian Livingston was giving a ball.

"I am going," he remarked, "to that

ball!"

And so it happened that at nine o'clock Mr. Kendall Randolph Lightfoot was regarding himself in evening clothes in one of the full length mirrors the room at his hotel afforded.

. . . It was without question a flaw-

less apparition that greeted him, one calculated to inspire confidence. . . .

A little later, standing upon the doorstep of a fashionable woman's mansion, he was not like the wise man who surveys the ground before erecting the temple—he saw only the temple—Vivian! But one thought filled his mind: an opportunity had arisen through which he could make a reality of what had lived for months in his mind. So completely was he a victim of this vision that even with his finger on the bell he still saw Vivian as he had first seen her, standing in an open field at sunrise.

Engrossed by this thought, and entirely unfamiliar with the details of the modern New York establishment of the wealthy, he was totally unprepared for all the formalities that confronted him as he gained entrance. Servants, music, flowers, movement! Nor was the brilliance of the highly illumined spacious rooms in which he a moment later found himself reassuring. The reckless spirit of the evening, however, had not entirely deserted him, and while confused, almost dazed, his outward selfpossession was in a measure sustained. Fixed to a position he had instinctively chosen in front of a window, where old rose damask curtains in a Dutch effect made a frame for him, he stood with his gaze wandering at random over the brilliant throng and tried to think of Vivian. In his mind she was no more a part of the scene about him than he

was, and he experienced a distinct shock when she suddenly appeared from somewhere—the central figure of

things.

As his eyes fell upon her the blood shot like boiling liquid through his veins, his head swam, and his vision dimmed. This, however, was for an instant only, and then forgetting all things, except that she had appeared, he devoured her with his eyes, amazed at the low estimate he had carried of her beauty. It was as though on their first meeting her costume had concealed it

She now wore a blue clinging gown of some silvery diaphanous material and from the crown of her head to her slippered feet she blazed in sapphires. They clung to her copper-gold hair, encircled her throat, fell in showers from her waist, and bespangled her slippers. This glittering image of her intimidated him, and he was attacked by a kind of stage fright that caused him to think of escape. He was on the eve of deciding upon this when suddenly he saw her coming towards him, her great eyes in advance of her, her jewels flashing and penetrating his glance.

For an instant each stood breathless, blinded by the other. It was Mr. Light-

foot who broke the silence.

"You forgive my presumption?" he

ventured softly.

"I do not consider it presumption," she answered, quivering from the low tones of his voice. "I have come to welcome you!"

Her eyes were upon his face.

"I appreciate your generosity," he breathed, "but all the same my coming here to-night was presumption!"

"I think your coming was perfectly natural!" she exclaimed, and smiled her

rapture at him.

"You are as gracious as you are generous," he murmured, "yet the fact remains that I took an unwarranted liberty in presenting myself unbidden at your home. I was impelled though by an impulse I couldn't resist. I was dragged here against my will, against reason!"

"Such impulses," she laughed, "are the only ones in life that count—the only ones that lead us anywhere. My view is from the mountain top!"

"When you descend to the valley," asked Mr. Lightfoot, lowering his face to hers, "do they forgive you that their all-important laws are not observed?"

"I never question," Vivian answered with charming audacity, "I do that

which is natural to me!"

"Yet it was a daring thing for me to do," urged Mr. Lightfoot, while bestowing upon her the full benefit of a studied and rapt expression.

"There is joy in daring!"

"You are the most beautiful being this world has ever held!" breathed Mr. Lightfoot passionately.

At this rapt moment her guardian appeared to claim her for a dance.

Lightfoot, F. F. V., saw her start, and he also saw the sharp look of scrutiny bestowed upon himself by the gentleman who led her away.

Drawn as by a magnet, he followed her to the ball-room, ablaze in a scarlet glow, where the dancers made colored

waves before his eyes.

In and out of these waves his eyes followed Vivian. He saw her in another man's arms, floating, darting, bowing, rising, like some wild jewelled mermaid fresh from the bottom of the sea. Her astounding hair glowed like phosphorescent lights; her jewels continued to flash and blind him. When she bent the knee and, with a movement of the body, recovered her position he very nearly lost his breath.

CHAPTER VI

A FEW hours later this same ballroom, the scene of so much life and movement, was as bare and desolate as a beach from which waves have receded, and in the single red globe that glowed one might fancy some scarlet sun about to set.

In this great room Vivian stood alone, motionless and dazed as one recovering from a violent storm.

Strewn about the floor were flowers.

natural and artificial, some crumpled, some dying. Across a scarlet rose a piece of torn chiffon lay like a cobweb. The numerous mirrors reflecting uncertain visions seemed like far distant lakes. In one she saw herself dimly outlined against a background of wilting orchids, and a moment later, Mr. Stanwood Lamarque approaching her.

"Who," he asked, pausing before her, was the handsome stranger of the

evening?"

"I don't care to have questions put to me, Tanny!" she replied, ill concealing the irritability provoked by both

his presence and his question.

Mr. Lamarque caught the irritable note, weighed it, and stood regarding her with an unpleasant expression of irony.

"Do you recall our conversation on the first evening of your arrival from

the South?"

"I do."

"How I told you that as long as you maintained indifference to other men, your indifference to me was rather more satisfying than otherwise?"

"I do," again answered Vivian as to

a judge in court.

"That my patience about making you my wife was an intellectual indulgence?"

"Yes!"

"That is true. I have lived near you, Vivian, just as I have lived in the pages of a complex tantalizing book—sure of the end, but content to watch, analyze, in fact, the author's way of bringing it about. Do you suppose I shall allow some unappreciative reader to tear out the last pages of my book? If so you are very much mistaken!"

"The hour," she returned stagily, "is ill-suited to argument and I wish you

would go, Tanny!"

He smiled upon her patronizingly, ignored her petulantly expressed wish and

went on calmly.

"It is very evident to me, Vivian, that you have allowed yourself to become infatuated. That is not strange. The stranger is a very dazzling, capti-

vating personality. It may surprise you to know that I, as well as you, have enjoyed the presence of so unique a figure."

"Are you dealing in sarcasm," inquired Vivian coldly, "or does it please you to flatter?"

"To be frank, to flatter the gentleman would be difficult. Won't you sit down?"

"No!"

"Then I regret to keep you standing. But before leaving you I must have my say! It is quite true that I enjoyed with you this evening the presence of a stranger who quickly assumed the rôle of a rival. I felt it stimulating; I enjoyed it as a new situation. But it is not my intention, Vivian, to allow that kind of enjoyment to go too far, and so I thought I would warn you. You are sure you won't sit down?"

"I am perfectly sure. I can't see, Tanny," she went on a bit hurriedly, "since I am of age and your guardianship of me, in any real sense, is over, how it is in your power to dictate to me what I shall do—how far I shall go!"

"And that, Vivian, is for me to show you. Up to the present time the fight you have negatively put up against me has been interesting as a fight against a surrender to your own nature. have merely been taking a certain kind of pride in your strength, which little amusement, while taken seriously by you, has never for one instant been taken so by me. If I have made no effort to make a negative situation positive, it has been because the negative situation in itself gave me a certain sense of enjoyment that the positive—I refer to our marriage-might rob me of. But now that there is the possibility of a new situation that is not negative, I must begin new tactics. How far has this affair gone? What is that man to you?"

"Nothing!" she exclaimed, alertly on

the defensive.

"And yet," he half laughed, "you boldly proclaimed him a doubly honored guest! You know, of course," he went on, "that his presence and your manner

of treating him were the subject of comment to-night?"

"I have no doubt that your imagination furnished a good deal!"

"I have very little imagination. I deal in the facts of life!"

She found no reply to this and a silence fell between them, during which a milk wagon went by, and they heard the sharp voice of the driver speaking to his horse. Somehow she rather en-

preak.

While physical fatigue was practically unknown to her, what she now felt was oppression, an oppressed weariness that amounted to suffocation. As plain as day she had read her guardian's thought—as plain as day it went back five years. It caused her to feel caught

in a trap.

She took a few steps away from him and dropped rather heavily into a chair. She was like one suddenly made ill by an old wound considered healed. There is infinite pathos in the brave who show momentary signs of faltering, and Mr. Lamarque allowed himself the pleasure of being touched by just this kind of pathos, but only for a moment.

"You and I, Vivian," having stepped over to her, he took up deliberately, "know that the Vivian you present to the world is a living lie. We know that from the world's standpoint, your life has for the past five years been a very beautiful and highly decorated lie. This, with my own peculiar views, has been, not only no offence to me, but inasmuch as it has developed superior traits of character in you, highly entertaining. As an illustration of will power, a will power that has lifted you out of all prescribed conditions, put you even above and beyond yourself, you have indeed been superb! But would you," and he leaned over her, "be superb in the eyes of any other man seek-ing a wife?"

She merely put up her hands and

pushed him from her.

"Were it not for me," Mr. Lamarque continued calmly, "you could continue

to present yourself as a living lie—that is done by girls, I suppose, every day—but I exist, and, what is worse I exist for you—I want you for my wife! You can't conceive, can you, of my surrendering to another that which I hold of supreme importance, of such importance that I am quite ready and willing to overlook the flaw!"

"And if I refuse?" she asked, aroused into flashing at him a glance

vied the man outside in the cold day-\ of defiance.

"You have always refused—that has to a great extent constituted your charm. I have regarded you as different from other women of my fancy inasmuch as you have refused!"

"Do you mean," she asked in a voice as cold as his and rising as she spoke,

"that you would betray me?"

The early daylight had come in pale and ghostlike, killing all the lustre of things. She looked dead and the jewels on her had lost their sparkle.

"No," he answered, "I would force you to betray yourself. Before any other man can claim you, he will know from you what you are—a young lady," and his vanished smile returned, "as the story books put it, with a

past!"

He saw her shrink, not only at the idea but from him. It did not displease him. The game of life as played by Mr. Stanwood Lamarque was at high tension. He could no more have missed its moves, inflict what torture they might, than the little jockey could fail to lay the whip on and bury the spur in the horse he must bring in first.

"I am, Vivian," he went on, "a man who will do in this life whatever he sets out to do. Amuse yourself, but let that be the extent of it. Good morn-

ing!"

When he was gone she took the seat she had vacated and stared aimlessly ahead of her. Her joy of the evening lay like a dead thing in her open palms. It was as though she had visited a cemetery and seen Stanwood Lamarque tear off the flowers of the grave of her girlhood. It had never absolutely appalled her—until now.

CHAPTER VII

THE following weeks, nevertheless, were fascinating ones for Vivian and Mr. Lightfoot. The very atmosphere throbbed with temptation. It was as though they breathed through waves of bliss, as if every spoken word were a vibrating melody, every handclasp in greeting or parting a painful ecstasy. The most trifling affairs were fraught with palpitating danger. Smelling the same flower, tasting in common, was rapture they feared.

Day by day poor Lightfoot, F. F. V., was more and more dazzled by Vivian's wholly unique personality. Her beauty intoxicated him; her splendid environment confounded him; her marvelous costumes and jewels blinded him. There was something satisfyingly unreal in the situation, as though he had been touched by a fairy wand to find himself in an enchanted palace with a princess. To Vivian the situation, dangerous as it was romantic-dangerous because of Mr. Lamarque—was equally pleasing. That each experienced anxious moments in anticipation of the time when certain facts must come to light, added to, rather than detracted from the stolen hours.

These stolen hours were not empty ones, not by any means! Not only did Vivian make golden moments for her admirer in her magnificent drawingrooms, but he had been admitted to the dining-room and even to the realm of her dreams-the "studio." They motored together through the crisp air or playful snow storms, and he was present with her night after night in her box at the Opera or at some theatre. They lingered in book-stores; lunched at Delmonico's, and dined at the Ritz-Carlton. Sometimes while her chaperon remained in her own rooms, by request, he had dinner with her at her home, when they sat opposite each other like bride and groom. At other times she included her relative and acquaintances, and listened in rapture to whatever he said, watching him eagerly as though he were some wonderful possession that she was exhibiting. There were times when she hoped they would never reach the point of speaking of their love. They were sailing the high seas now, away out from the shore. When they spoke it would mean that they had reached port.

And yet back of it all lay the feverish desire to possess him securely. She would have purchased him if she could, squandered all her wealth to realize him as her own. Filled with these thoughts she would throw herself mentally into the marriage state, and revel in imaginary situations, such as smiling at him across the table, following him to the door, watching him dress, gazing at him lying asleep at her side. And then a kind of madness would seize her that would cause her heart to feel queer. It was the idea of a secret marriage before her lover knew about her. thought of Lamarque betraying her after marriage made her dismiss it in horror. So she simply threw herself upon the waves of fate, knowing that the fatal hour would arrive only too

During this palpitatingly interesting period of her existence, while we see Mr. Lamarque, and that, of course, by his own consent, in the background, it must not for an instant be supposed that because he kept in the background he, in any way, allowed himself to be either ignored or overlooked. From his very position he showed them off just as he, at a given moment, desired they should be reflected. Always in the presence of others he thwarted Mr. Lightfoot's efforts at conversation. Alone with the two he treated Mr. Lightfoot to bits of biting sarcasm that cut into his fine skin like small splinters of glass. If he happened to find himself alone with him he ignored him. On the other hand if he chanced to find himself alone with Vivian he turned upon her currents that caused her restlessness, even anger. Having given her the benefit of a smile that showed her his fine teeth he would with supercilious indifference walk away from her.

In these moments Vivian would turn

even more eagerly to a companionship in which there was no disdain. When her eyes rested upon the sensitive and perfect face of Mr. Lightfoot, a maddening passion for its beauty never failed to hold her spellbound. She gazed upon it, as she gazed upon sunset clouds, or the ocean sparkling in light, fascinated by the wonder it held for her. If her eyes closed, it was as though she found herself engulfed in tepid waters that took her strength, but that also filled her with unspeakable ecstasy. That he did not speak of his love continued to be accepted by her with a sense of relief. There were times, however, when her confession would burn on her lips as though this would bring forth his own.

At this particular stage of the game Vivian might be likened to the proverbial mouse the cat lets play. She certainly was playing, playing for her life at that, as assiduously as ever any little mouse ever played, and it certainly amused Mr. Lamarque to give free play to her, to him, futile divagations. He might easily be described, or considered, a mildly interested, somewhat amused onlooker of a one-act comedy in his life. What to his actors was very highflown drama was to him scarcely drama at all, inasmuch as the situations were all quite too legitimate and nat-If he allowed the little play, a pretty little play he admitted, to go on, it was because he knew that if it ever should develop sufficiently to encroach upon the big play of which it was a fragment, it could easily be brought to a finish.

There was nothing heroic in Mr. Lamarque's attitude, but then Mr. Lamarque did not deal in heroics; he had long since abandoned the elemental for the far more sophisticated methods of strategy. One not wholly in sympathy with his advanced reasoning might, in the hour, regard him as an animal trainer who, while allowing the animals to dance, carried a prod. As a matter of fact, the more capers his performers cut up the better he liked it.

Had Vivian, as he had assured her,

not resisted him, he might not have cared to possess her at all. Or had she even now, to put it figuratively, been standing at the end of a cleared road with extended hands waiting for him, he might not have cared to traverse the distance that separated them. Waiting women and clear roads were not to his liking. He preferred the escaping woman whom he must pursue through tangled underbrush, and, if need be, poisonous weeds. His confession that the unexpected appearance of a rival upon the scene had given him pleasure was quite true. It caused him to scent pleasure through situations that he could easily convert into complicated ones, and complications to an egotistical nature, egotistical in the sense of selfassurance, represented spice—the dash of red pepper on the lobster.

Of late Mr. Lamarque, and he knew this, had not been as calmly deliberate about her, though, as his pose. The game, the cold, deliberate game of patient waiting had begun to be tiresome. Through an over indulgence of contemplation concerning the feast, he was a bit wearied.

On one particularly bright afternoon, when a light fantastic fall of snow had swept away the sordid appearance of things he decided to bring about a quick finish—a climax.

He therefore called upon Vivian about five o'clock in the afternoon.

"It is necessary, Vivian, that I trouble you to sign a paper."

"I don't feel like signing papers."
With the smile that she did not see, as she had closed her eyes, but that she distinctly and uncomfortably felt, he walked over, dragging a light chair after him, and seated himself in front of her.

For quite a while he gave himself up to a silent, somewhat rapt contemplation of her. She was in the moment an unruly child to whom he was about to administer a thrashing. As it was to be a deliberate and entirely dispassionate thrashing, he felt that he could beforehand give himself the pleasure, recently denied, of feasting upon her charm.

He especially, as he found himself admitting, liked her in her present mood, one that so distinctly, and yet so uselessly, defied him. He liked to see her rampant with, yet controlling, a violent passion that her whole recumbent being breathed for an individual who had by a physical perfection and somewhat chivalrous and sentimental manner, through her imagination, fired her senses, so long held in check. He liked to contemplate her past power to yield to the check-rein of life, and her present readiness to throw it off and run away. He could fancy her being in just such a frame of mind five years ago when, with that same fire of her being at white heat, she did run away. He recalled a rather wan girl, for a year or more of that period, but a girl who, nevertheless, never failed to fight for victory over self, one who had never faltered or expressed a regret, who had accepted the golden apple, suffered over the rotten core, but—been brave.

"You appear very unhappy this afternoon, Vivian. What's the trouble?"

She didn't reply to this and remained so immovable with her eyes still closed, that another might have supposed his long, silent observation of her had caused her to fall asleep. Mr. Lamarque did not think so; he knew that she was achingly awake.

"Why don't you answer me?" shook her shoulder lightly and she opened her eyes, eyes whose wonder never failed to surprise, and looked at

"Because I don't choose to," she answered, "because," and she emphasized, "I don't want to, and I wish you would

"That is an old story," he answered lightly. "Like all women you wish to escape the man who is destined to win

She half laughed and drew up her

"Your egotism and insolence are old stories, too," she remarked, giving her attention to the ceiling.

"My egotism and insolence are not what you have to fear, Vivian. Both in them, and in my possession of you, there will be compensations. The real thing you may have, in the future, to both fear and resent will be that when I have made of you a bundle of desire for me, when you do want me to stay" -Mr. Lamarque laughed-"I shall be apt to want to go! One of the things, if any, that I have hated to face, Vivian, is the hour when I shall no longer want you, no longer care to sit, as I am doing this moment, and feast my eyes upon you. It will come, of course, it comes to all men; and therein, in my estimation, lies the whole tragedy of man's love-it never lasts. I know," he saw her restlessness, saw her shrink from his coming between her and her thoughts, "the general idea is that it is the woman who suffers most from man's inconstancy. That is not my idea. The one horrible thing, the most horrible thing about love is man's invariable fatigue of a woman within whom he has aroused-what shall I say?—a perpetual passion."

"Do you suppose," and she again turned burning eyes that she tried to make appear cold on him, "that I am interested in your psychological discus-

sion of love?"

"No, you are interested in yourself, and all the really wonderful emotions you have been able to arouse!"

"Well?" she asked through half-shut

eyes, "what of it?"

"Do you remember my telling you that when your indulgence in this little affair had gone too far I would put a stop to it?"

She sat up, planted her feet firmly and looked him squarely in the face. "If," she asked, "you are so powerful in your ability to control my acts, why didn't you stop this 'little affair' in the beginning?"

"I have already told you! It would have robbed us both of entertainment. and defeated the present interesting sit-

uation."

"And now?"

"The climax, an exciting one I anticipate, will soon be reached, and after that the matter will be at an end."

"What is the climax?" she demanded,

eyeing him.

Mr. Lamarque lifted his head slightly, took his chin in forefingers and thumb, and made a narrow slit of his own lids before speaking.

"Your confession of your past," he

finally answered.

"You think that will end it, of

course?" she half sneered.

"I know it will, Vivian. I have not the least doubt that your Southern admirer is tied hand and foot, tied with double bow knots, by all the old traditions of masculinity. When he knows you as you are he will wash his hands of you!"

It was not often that Vivian flushed. She was too well poised, but she did flush now, violently, as though a flame had shot upwards from her feet and

lost itself in her glowing hair.

"Do you mean," she asked, peering at him anxiously, "that if I remain silent, you would have the courage to—to tell on me?"

"Oh!" and Mr. Lamarque very nearly affected a shrug, "I would have the courage to do anything if it came to the point of losing you!"

"Even," she grew white as the marble statue at her back, "if it involved your

being vile!"

"Certainly! To be vile is nothing! And besides, what happens, as in this case, to appear vile to you is to me merely a means of making life thrilling. Why should you be surprised? You know me! You know that I am the playwright of my own life; that my moves are all planned and with no more consideration for my actors than Wagner had for his singers. You happen to be the star in the biggest play life has as yet presented to me, and I shall act my part coolly and deliberately, mercilessly, if need be, with absolute indifference to all things except myself, to the finish! I repeat, why should you be surprised? It's all an old story to you, my fixed intention to, at some time, possess you. That time," he bent over her, "has arrived."

She turned from him bewildered, but

quickly got possession of herself, and answered him almost fiercely: "It has not arrived, for just as you are bent upon me, I am bent upon another. I am, apart from my love, sick and tired of your life of machination, that so flatteringly includes me! I am," and she tossed her head and stamped her foot, "sick of it all! Your position as my guardian only guarded me for yourself, and I won't have it! I tell you right now I am done with you forever and ever and ever—and I want you to stand out of my way! I hate you, and I sometimes think you hate me!"

"Genuine passion is two-thirds

hatred, Vivian!"

"Then I don't want it! For five years this two-thirds hatred has played about my life! I don't want it—I won't have it! I want the tender, beautiful love that I know awaits me."

He laughed a laugh that infuriated

her.

"Oh! you may laugh," she flung at him, "but you will see! Why can't you, though," she went on passionately, "be different? Why can't you be a man? Why don't you say, 'Vivian, I know love has come to you, and I'll get out of your way'? Why don't you say, 'I know your secret, Vivian, and if you want it guarded I'll guard it for you with my life'? That would be living with the right spirit—there would be some heroism in that!"

"But that kind of thing wouldn't interest me. I don't like heroism. Heroism implies surrender of self for the sake of others. That doesn't appeal to me. I am absolutely selfish. I couldn't possibly do anything for another—even for you—that was not a move in my own behalf as well. You know that."

"Yes, and I know another thing, Tanny: that henceforth I shall live my life in defiance of you! Our relations are ended—I don't want to see you

here any more!"

He remained silent a moment, looking upon her half derisively, half pityingly. Then he laughed and before she could prevent it he leaned over and pressed his lips lightly to her hair. His

touch penetrated like the touch of a live wire, and she sprang up, flashing at him a glance of fury.

He returned her glance with a calmly

deliberate evil one.

"You are," he said quietly, "the lovely passion flower, Vivian, with one leaf browned. When your now ardent admirer is told of that brown leaf, he will throw down the flower and trample on it!"

"I don't believe it!" she breathed and

clinched her fists.

"Will you put him to the test?"

"Yes," she answered in a low voice, "I will put him to the test!"

"When?"

She was silent. "When?" Mr. Lamarque repeated.

"To-night?"

She dropped back to the couch, holding on to the edge of it with tense

"Yes, I will tell him to-night!"

She was so rigid and her pallor was so deadly now that it almost startled him, and Mr. Lamarque mentally commented upon the fact that perhaps, after all, bravery was the most pathetic of all human characteristics.

"Very well," he then said, "au revoir," and put out his hand, which she

ignored.

"Won't you shake hands?" he asked,

affecting a provoking smile.

she answered once more, springing to her feet. "I won't! Our relations are ended! I don't want to see you here any more!"

"You won't, my dear Vivian, until

you send for me!"

At the door he turned and smiled at her. It was a peculiar smile that came from his eyes with the lips taking part half passionately, half derisively. It drew her to him. She took a step forward. The smile deepened, became cynical, and he left.

CHAPTER VIII

ONE can only pity Vivian left, as she so undoubtedly was, single-handed and alone, to confront and battle with—for life itself it was-traditions hardened by time into adamant. Nothing that was splendid in her was to count in this fray! Mr. Kendall Randolph Lightfoot wouldn't at all see just how splendid she was, how unreservedly she had accepted him for what he was, just that and nothing more. Nor would he be able to understand how ready she would be to champion him in any circumstances—stand his ground for him!

At any rate, whether all this was to prove true or not, her subconsciousness was attacked by it, or something like it, for no sooner had her guardian passed from her sight than she felt overcome by a kind of terror, terror, no doubt, of what faced her, what she had to do. It was like an overwhelming fatigue and she stood as one dazed, helpless rather, and then taking a couple of uncertain steps forward, she dropped to the seat on the couch she had vacated.

For a while she sat, wholly conscious of her terror, unequal to the task that lay before her, that of dragging up a fragment of her past, a fragment of her life that might, for all she knew, prove hideous to the beholder, and in all its That was stark nakedness show it. what she had to do; that was what Tanny had forced upon her. To this girl, unfitted by nature to take in, see the importance of prescribed rules of deportment, who had always entertained for herself a feeling of detachment, as though she soared above them, there seemed a certain mockery in the situation by which, left to herself, uninterfered with by her guardian, she could, with a wave of the hand, brush aside. That her future, as she reasoned, must depend upon this very fragment of her past, seemed to her, aided by her keen desire, absurd. Torn by conflicting ideas, none of which appeared to her as important, at any rate, important for her, she wanted to laugh, as though she had reached a point where everything became trivial.

She sat with the darkness a long while thus, wrestling with her problem. And then the beautiful happened, just as to beautiful natures it ever does.

Her faith returned, faith in God, faith in herself, in the man she loved! She became transported! She thought a powerful strange light appeared, enveloping her and everything, and thathow she put up her head to listen!she heard birds singing. Her mind flew to the old widowed relative upstairs, who while she herself was demanding so much-and her "so much" was solely Lightfoot, F. F. V.—demanded only to live. The loneliness of her patient life overcame Vivian completely, filling her with contrition that was followed by resolutions as to the many things she could and would do in the future to brighten that life. She grew eager and excited. She would like to have it in her power to lighten every burden in the world, right all the wrongs—forgive all error! What a beautiful thing if every wrong on earth could be forgiven in one moment! And, of course, this boundless forgiveness on her part included Tanny! She wished she could tell him how she forgave him, and didn't mind at all!

A little laugh escaped her, and then tears filled her eyes and her impassioned

face grew almost holy.

The rest of the evening was passed by her as one intoxicated. She played the piano, she sang, she danced before mirrors. She dined, or pretended to, in her room, and when the service had been removed she had Marie dress her in white, but with great splendor, with pearls for ornamentation. Afterwards she sat in a half-darkened room in the reflection of a blue light, passionately sweet and hopeful, like an ardent devotee looking forward to her first communion.

When Lightfoot, F. F. V., was announced she told the servant to conduct him to the studio and while mounting the steps to meet him, she did what she very seldom did—she prayed.

CHAPTER IX

"Is my cavalier dreaming?" she demanded brightly, pausing on the inside of a pair of pale, silvery-blue portières.

To Mr. Lightfoot, who intuitively felt, even as had Mr. Lamarque, that the time for a climax had been reached, the time when he must in one breath declare his love and his unfitness from a worldly standpoint to ask Vivian's hand in marriage, her appearance was a shock. For a moment he could think but one thing—how wonderful she was!

"What do you think of this," she asked, throwing open her arms, "isn't

it beautiful?"

"You are!" he answered her passionately, all his adoration of her in glowing eyes. "You are," he repeated, "so beautiful and so wonderful that . . ."

And all that either of them could afterwards recall was that as one springs to capture a wild bird that has alighted and may at any moment fly away, he sprang upon her, folded her in his arms and fastened his lips to hers. It was a kiss devoid of either judgment or reason, a madman's kiss of so long duration that it was like drinking from her lips. When he released her, she fell back, the atmosphere throbbing about her. Her lids fluttered and she put out her hands. But as one suddenly recovering his reason he stood motionless. Finally he approached her timidly.

"Tell me to go!" he breathed.

"Why?" she answered with a faint smile.

"Because," he said in low tones, "if I remain I will forget myself again. I will fold you to me and I will kiss you as I did just now—no, not that way—more wildly, and words will burst from me that I have not the right to speak."

"What words?" The smile was still

in her eyes.

"I will tell you," he breathed, "of my love!"

"And why not?" she inquired breath-

lessly.

"Because," a n s w e r e d Lightfoot, F. F. V., bravely, "I have not the right! Because just as you are wealthy, I am poor. Why, I haven't even a home to offer you! I told you the first night I came here that my coming was the act of a madman! It was more, it was the

act of a man who has forgotten even honor in a blind passion. Every time I have been with you was an act of deception, since all along I knew, even though I could win your love, I could not, was not in position to marry youask you to be my wife!"

She surprised him by a nervous

laugh.

"I do not care about any of those things," she exclaimed. "What is it to me whether you are rich or poor? I care for you!"

Suddenly all the joyousness faded from her eyes and she grew pale.

"Tell me," she said, laying an anxious hand lightly on his sleeve, "aren't you that way about me?"

"About you," he said, peering at her,

"I about you?"

"But I mean it," she remarked, her fingers now clutching his arm. "Suppose," she spoke slowly and with increasing pallor, "that I had deceived you. Would it make any difference?"

"You!" he breathed, lifting her face to look into her eyes. "You!" he re-

peated.

She broke from him.

"But suppose," she exclaimed, "suppose before I met you I had-had a love affair-"

"Some girlish fancy!" he interrupted, almost playfully, so preposterous was

her question.

"Yes, a girlish fancy, that is true, but a serious one—one," she paused, "that in your eyes might make," she again paused, "all the difference!"

"Nothing could make any difference in my love-my adoration of you!"

"You are sure?"

"As of my life! It is not a question of you, but of me!"

"I have settled it about you," she answered eagerly. "It didn't take me one moment to do that! I don't care who you are, what you have or have not, what you have done-" She paused again while a wondrous light gathered and shone in her eyes. "I love you and nothing else on this earth matters! Tell me, tell me," and she stamped her foot, and then crept up and peered into his face, "can you be like that to me?" "Yes, that, and ten million times

more!"

"Would you," and he marvelled at the look of her, "be afraid-to-beput-to-the-test-?"

"No!"

"Even so," and he marvelled more that she was so deadly serious now, "I must put that to the test! The time has come for me to tell you." She pointed to a chair a couple of feet away. "Sit there!"

There was something strained and intensely dramatic in her sudden attitude, something that Mr. Lightfoot found himself fearing, but that he had neither the strength nor inclination to question —something that baffled him. So he seated himself, very straight and rigid, watching her closely as she bent forward to him somewhat eagerly. When she began to speak there was a tragic note in her voice that stirred him to his depths! Her very lones bespoke calamity and he gave himself up to a perplexing sense of helplessness.

CHAPTER X

"To BEGIN with," she said, "I must go back to my childhood. When I was very young my mother died. I was terribly affected. After a few months my father decided to take me to Europe. This was wise. The change opened up a life for me, and it was not long before my new environment began to have a magic effect. I was constantly being stirred by new emotions, and it was at this period that I awoke, for the first time, consciously, to love."

Mr. Kendall Randolph Lightfoot made a movement to interrupt her—to speak-but she merely raised a deter-

ring hand.

"Adjoining our hotel was a beautiful château in which a nobleman had established his mistress. The sight of this beautiful place, with its rare gardens, where flowers bloomed, marbles gleamed and fountains played, and these two given up to love, excited my

imagination. From my window I used to see her, lovely, I thought, as a scarlet poppy, always beautifully clothed, walking about the garden in the early morning; sometimes at noon sipping chocolate in the bower; sometimes standing beside a statue in the moonlight. I was very young and, being fresh from sorrow, very sensitive to impressions. My mother had represented to me purity, saintliness-this woman was the wicked enchantress who lured men. I believed that then," she smiled wearily, "and even to this day I can feel the pity that stirred my heart when I first saw him."

She paused and another smile, rather bitter this time, crossed her lips. As though stifling memories, she quickly

took up her story again.

"I had never seen a man who looked like him, and for some reason his poise, so calm and graceful, stirred me. I fell in love with him, and there sprang up within me the wild desire to save and redeem him. I had but one wish-to take him from the wicked woman and give myself to him by a holy tie. You see, while in my mind she was wicked, he was not. I wanted to be his wife. I saw in that all that was beautiful in life for him and for me, and I saw no reason why she should be considered at all! Can you imagine anything stranger than that? It was true-the result of inculcated ideas. Having seen him on one or two occasions pass through our hotel gardens, I decided to lay in wait for him. One night, when the moon was very bright and I was seated as usual on a bench along the side of the walk, I felt a kind of excitement, a certain triumphing of my emotions, and knew that the hour of our meeting was at hand. It was true. He did come! He took a seat beside me and began speaking, first of all, of my hair, which after a while he touched. From that moment I forgot all things, even my dream of his redemption. could think of nothing but him, his eyes, his lips, his wonderful form and carriage—the thought of him drowned all else!"

She paused again and Mr. Lightfoot felt the necessity to break the strain by urging her on.

"What happened?" he asked huskily. She didn't reply immediately. She was looking beyond him, apparently in deep thought.

"Well!" he exclaimed sharply, and

she started.

"From the moment he took his seat beside me I was just like a drunken person—ecstatic, irresponsible, incapable of thought, in a kind of delirium. The next day I walked about as one in a dream. At night I lay awake, my arms extended to the waves of love that took away my breath. A new world had opened to me, and I had become a new being. I had the feeling constantly of everything slipping from me and this would make me laugh—it was such a happy feeling. Whenever I saw him I seemed to be floating upon perfumed waves."

She paused and noting the look upon her listener's face, exclaimed: "I must make a long story short! One night, exactly one week after I met him, after we had sat a while in our garden, he got up and taking me by the hand led me, just as nurses do children, to the gate of the garden of the wicked woman. When I hesitated about intruding there, he told me that the garden was his and that she was away attending the Opera. He took a key from his pocket as he told me this and opened the beautiful iron gates. When I saw the garden all silvery in the moonlight, and caught a glimpse of his face, nothing else in the world had any significance for me. It was just as though I had died and found myself on the outside of Paradise with the portals open. He bowed very low to me, smiled, and stepped aside as I entered. The moment was one of those perfect ones of life, but when I heard the gate close I felt suddenly afraid. He saw me shrink. It seemed to please him, for he laughed. And then, just as one administers poison to make the victim helpless, he lifted my face and put a long kiss on my lips. It did the work he intended

it should do. . . . I cried a little as I walked by his side to the rose-covered bower where I had often seen the wicked woman . . . That is my story," she ended. "That night I gave myself to him! Are you going to give me up?"

It seemed to Lightfoot, F. F. V., that her words, carefully and cautiously rung out on the midnight silence of the place, had gradually turned him to stone. For quite a while both speech and movement were denied him. Finally he got up mechanically, like a wooden figure, and started to the door. She was ahead of him, though, with her hands pressed against his breast.

"Let me go!" he said.

"Let you go!" She surprised him by an unheard-of peal of laughter. "Let you go? I won't let you go! What are you talking about? You mean—you mean for that one single incident in my life you want to give me up—sacrifice my love—our happiness?"

"Certainly!" he answered. "I do! Of course I do!" The words issued from his lips as from a ventriloquist's

figure.

"Let me go!"

"I won't let you go!" cried Vivian in a half scream.

"You will!" He was tugging at her hands. "I am going—let me go!"

"I won't—I won't let you go! Do you think I am going to let you sit in judgment on my acts and turn on your heel and walk away from me? Wait a moment! Wait!"

She caught him by the arm, turning a desperate countenance to him and a look that had a tiny bit of fear of what was in her mind.

"Think!" she whispered apologetically, "what you have done!"

"I?" he asked in surprise, peering at

her curiously.

"Yes," Vivian breathed, feeling a sudden hope over having possibly, through his sense of justice, scored, "you!"

"What's that got to do with it?" he

asked blankly.

"What's that got to do with it?" She again burst into a kind of frantic laugh-

ter and fell away from him, bowing low to him in mock ceremony, a kind of distracted gesture that dishevelled her hair. "What's that got to do with it?" she repeated, regaining an upright position and staring at him.

"I'm a man!" said Mr. Kendall Randolph Lightfoot, and tried to sweep past

her.

But she detained him, and with tears gushing to her eyes and rolling down her cheeks caught up one of his hands and covered it with kisses. Still holding on to it, she looked at him through her tears.

"I love you!" she said. "Do you understand? I love you, and you are talking of leaving me! Leaving me! Do you know what that means?"

She laughed almost merrily, as though the very idea was preposterous,

amusingly so.

"Why," she went on, "I would go mad! I would! I know I would! You don't believe it, but I would!" and she buried her face on his arm, sobbing.

It was in this moment that Mr. Lightfoot rose to his true height as a supreme representative of masculine morality. Through her bravely confessed error she had changed from angel to harlot. . . .

Without a word he flung her from him and strode out of the door. . . .

In so doing we cannot fail to applaud Mr. Lightfoot, for was he not, according to him, acting up to what he had been-taught to believe was right? Had he not, without hesitation, renounced all that any man might value, an unusual and beautiful woman with whom he was desperately in love; wealth, an opportunity to shine as a social figure, distinction through his profession, since the way would be paved for him with gold? We who are, we trust, developed beyond traditional commands, we who are so surely, in the correct eyes of Mr. Lightfoot, pagans, must admire him for his unhesitating renunciation of love and all worldly benefits, when those things infringed, and it must not be forgotten cruelly, on what he undoubtedly believed to be his principles.

While Mr. Lightfoot, who had perpetrated in our eyes, though not in his, this wholly unwarranted act, strode through the street to his hotel, where he swung, an altogether wretched and wholly injured and incensed individual, into the bar, and while Vivian was standing with her eyes fixed in horror on the silvery-blue portières through which he had passed, Mr. Stanwood Lamarque was seated in a comfortable chair at his club, smoking one cigarette after another, and agreeably wondering how it had all come out. Nay, more, he was even considering where and how he would spend his honeymoon with Vivian.

As he rose to repair to his quarters at the Plaza, he closed his gold cigarette case, a Christmas present from Vivian, and hoped, now that he, Mr. Lamarque, had by his somewhat precipitate act of the afternoon brought and he entertained not one doubt as to this—the whole interesting affair of the winter to a dramatic climax, Mr. Kendall Randolph Lightfoot would have the good sense not to prove troublesome and simply disappear.

A sudden warmth of the night containing for Mr. Lamarque a pleasing promise of his favorite season, spring, he ordered his car uncovered and took a drive through the park beneath a beautiful yet apparently seriously troubled sky before turning in.

CHAPTER XI

As Vivian stood, in the meantime, as we have before mentioned, with horror-struck eyes upon the silvery portières through which her lover had so tragically passed, her beauty became soaked in a kind of grimness. All the sweetness of her nature slumbered; all the animal in her seemed crouched and

parently developing some act of vengeance. Finally, still motionless, a being, as it were, wholly inanimate, she took a deep breath and spoke aloud.

ready to spring. For quite a while she stood thus, ap-

"It's like this," she said, "they feel like this when they leave home and friends for fire to consume the pain, for glaring lights to shut out indignities! If they are bad, I am bad! For every feeling that makes outcasts of them," and Vivian clenched her fists, "is raging in me! It's man's injustice, that's what it is, his injustice! I myself am done with good, with ideals, with my own heart, my own soul! I've been despised! I'm going to be despicable! I'm going to be vile, vile, vile!"

After a while her eyes began to stray about at random, fixing aimlessly upon first one thing and then another, and finally they travelled over herself, her entire person; first at each shoulder, then straight downward to her feet that were in spun silver slippers. Her costume was also of spun silver with little garnitures of yellow. It seemed silly to her; and she herself, she whom the costume was designed for, seemed silly-an expression of vanity that might be swept away with the wave of a hand, like any gaudy butterfly.

Presently her eyes shifted carefully from herself to the high-back armchair in which Mr. Lightfoot had sat while listening to her confession, and a kind of a shudder passed over her, followed by a feeling of intense agonized loneliness. She walked up to it, bent over it, and passed her hands over the back where his head had rested. Then she knelt in it and pressed her lips to it, recalling his face as he listened to her story and when he fell away from her after it was finished. A dry sob escaped her and she tried to get up, stand on her feet, but was overcome by weariness and knelt there, her hands hanging limp, sobbing. At first they were suppressed sobs, but gradually they became noisy and hysterical, the kind one gives vent to at the emptiness confronting one in the home on returning from a funeral.

And then suddenly she was on her feet, defiant again, her eyes flashing fire

through her tears. Anger, indignation, fury closed in on her, as the waves and billows and foam

of a storm-tossed sea close in on a frail vessel caught in its fury. It was a storm that swept reason aside and left her a temporary victim of the worst in her. No soul, no intellect, only the physical part of her, broken loose and beyond her control. The consciousness of this caused her intense suffering. It seemed to her that she had been thrown against a jagged rock and was bleeding from a thousand bruised cuts. There was, too, a kind of wild pleasure coupled with this pain that alarmed her. She wondered what it could be, this exquisite torture that she shrank from and yet clung to. It seemed to her that she was responding to two separate calls upon her—pain and pleasure. Perhaps, she thought, as her eyes blazed, this was madness. Perhaps the insane felt thus when they screamed and laughed in a breath; maybe their bodies performed absurdities that thus thrilled.

She thought then that she was being pursued and wanted to run—to rush out somewhere into the crowds of the city, that were apparently coming towards her in a blood-red vision. . . And then the crowds dispersed and in the blood-red glow stood Stanwood Lamarque, the dishevelled hair on his brow, his eyes shining, all the devil in him beckoning to her, all that was supreme in him, supreme in being above the conventional, supreme in that he could reach out, already had reached out, to take her, not for what she was,

but as she was!

CHAPTER XII

Once, on her return from abroad, Vivian had brought with her an immense quantity of Indian jewelry, also some idols, statuary, bric-à-brac, etc., enough to furnish quite a hall, and in the morning she had her studio converted into something that resembled an Oriental temple. Also, the place was aflame with red flowers, hundreds of which seemed to have bloomed there during the night, and there were Japanese lanterns as costly as Vantine could

furnish. Rugs, in which reds predominated, had been substituted for others, and lay about the floor like splashes of warm blood. The couches and sofa pillows reflecting the tinting of crimson lights were like mounds of fiery snow.

. . The place glowed.

Vivian herself was as transformed as the room. In a costume of shimmering diaphanous material she blazed from head to foot in rubies. As she moved she jingled. Her bare feet were in scarlet sandals and her unbound hair fell about her like flames. Her brows and lashes, heavily pencilled, intensified the smouldering fire in her eyes. Balms and powder dulled the sating sheen of her face, neck, and arms. Her cheeks and lips were highly tinted. She bore little resemblance to herself either in appearance or in her reckless extravagant abandonment to an idea. The embodiment of sensuous art she represented—the very trumpet call of female audacity and lawless sovereignty.

The hours of suffering the night before—hours spent in wrestling for mastery over love—had enabled her to succeed, if not in obliterating, at least in chaining it. The morning had been given up to directing her temple—for so she named it. The afternoon she had given to diving into the histories of famous women who had lived lawless lives. . . . Night was here and in thought she was already one of these

women

When Stanwood Lamarque entered she was standing beside a Moorish table of inlaid pearl drinking wine from a golden goblet.

Surprise very nearly robbed him of complete self-possession. But having given one swift, comprehensive glance, he approached her with a quiet smile.

"You sent for me?" he asked.
"Yes." She gave him a long, narrow look from between her blackened
lashes.

His smile deepened.

"To take part in a play?"

"Yes," she answered, "a real play," and her intention gleamed anew in her smouldering eyes.

"Which is quite interesting, Vivian!"
Mr. Lamarque, entirely himself now, answered. "Will you tell me the plot

and outline my part?"

"I will." As she spoke she assumed a recumbent position on one of the near-by fiery couches. "Draw up a chair and listen."

He did so, his lips maintaining their

conventional smile.

"Well, what is it, my dear Vivian?"
"That of an impassioned lover!"

"Indeed! You flatter me!"

She made no reply to this, but he noted the hatred, coupled, however, with admiration that he quickly enough interpreted. She had made her confession, and as the superior man she was according him justice—which was exactly what Mr. Lamarque had played for, and so gratifyingly.

Finally she announced it.

"I told him!" she said, looking squarely at him.

"I am indebted to you!"

She looked away from him, perplexed, with the manner of one who has forgotten things—gotten lost. And then of a sudden acute intelligence leaped to her eyes.

"It was the fear of your doing so that prompted me—made me do it," she exclaimed, "otherwise—I didn't know it then, but I did afterwards—I

might have kept silent!"

"I believe you, Vivian. Society entails upon a woman to be a libertine or a liar! Nevertheless, you were brave. What a wonderful," he glanced about him with interest, "transformation here! It is most effective!"

"For my purpose?" she inquired.
"Yes," and he bent to her, "for your

purpose."

She allowed him to hold her eyes.

"Both the place and myself are prepared for a supreme sacrifice," she went on insolently.

"Which I can but appreciate since you are so gracious as to include me."

The smile he was affecting, entirely freed from its usual cruelty, was, in fact, most captivating. She resisted it, and impulsively pushing him from her

took an upright position that planted

her feet in the scarlet fur rug.

"I have sent for you to be done with being what you once called me, a living lie! From now on I'm going to be the truth!"

"I applaud you, Vivian!" and Mr. Lamarque lightly clapped his hands.

She seemed to experience suffocation, but sprang up rather triumphantly.

"I love him," she exclaimed. "Don't you deceive yourself about that! But," and she abruptly seated herself again and leaned forward intently, "I want to get even with him!"

"You are right. I quite agree with

you!"

"I love him," she breathed, "and I want to insult that love—I want to insult it as he has me!"

"Is that," and he bent to her, "why

you sent for me?"

She made no reply to this, but lay back on her pile of red-gleaming pillows and shut her eyes. Her memories of the past weeks were all stabbing her—causing her extreme anguish and unutterable sadness. Through her closed eyes she seemed to see the face of Lightfoot, F. F. V., delicate and passionate, close to her own, and all her being responded to the love that had broken its chains and come back to her. Intense yearning overcame her, tears filled the closed eyes and ran down her temples; her arms opened to enfold him in 'a passionate embrace. . . .

Mr. Stanwood Lamarque sat by quietly watching her, and wholly conscious of what was going on in her mind. He knew that in spite of his arguments, his sophistries, in spite of all he had ever said to her, she loved the man she was thinking of. He knew that she had sent for him to drown that love. Instead of repulsing him, it merely added charm to the situation. As a situation, unexpected, unusual, highly strained, it appealed to him. He felt, as he had said, grateful to her and especially so to Mr. Lightfoot, that their combined efforts at happiness had resulted in his. As far as his nature permitted he was sorry for her.

same kind of pity, however, perhaps that an ancient Roman might have entertained for a purchased slave awaiting in tears and despair his pleasure. It was tremendously appealing—dramatic. How quiet she was! He almost felt unconscious sleep had overtaken her. . . . He bent forward and looked at her. As he did so her pencilled lashes parted slowly and her eyes, slightly startled, met his and she smiled. His magnetism had penetrated her.

He got up and stood over her, in spite of himself partly dazed by a situation that only a woman such as she could have planned. Trembling inward-

ly, he bent over her.

She made no response, lying perfectly still, as one dead. Nevertheless, he could hear distinctly the beating of her heart. Her chin was well up and after fastening his eyes upon it he bent down stealthily and laid his lips to hers. Her arms went up and encircled his neck. He denied her the kiss and knelt beside her.

"Good night, my child," he whispered. "I may have been a trying guardian to you, Vivian, inasmuch as I have included you in my own way, against your will, in my life, offering you scant rewards for my pleasures. I have also for my entertainment been very cruel to you during the past weeks, but it seems that to be cruel interests me. I do not attempt to justify it. What I do is what I am. I glory in whatever I do, because it is an expression of what I am. There is only one thing that I have not the courage for it is to take advantage of your folly, bring shame to your cheek, regret to your beautiful eyes. In as far as that counts, I am worthy of you. There are many other reasons that justify my possession of you. While my interest in you holds, you will find existence with me wonderful. When I have tired, I will not hold you, but be your protector. Good night. Go to your room and sleep; you are very tired."

He stood up and she opened her eyes and looked at him. . . .

The hair that transformed him from

the conventional American to some fardistant Russian was, and just as it should be, upon his brow; his smouldering eyes held a dream. . . .

"Tanny!" she breathed and put out

her hands.

He brought them together, held them in a firm clasp, looked at her a full moment and turned and left . . .

CHAPTER XIII

THE opening night of the Metropolitan Opera had in no way changed. Exactly the same people, it would seem, occupied the boxes; the same lights glowed or were cast into shade; the same vibratory excitement; the same distant scraping of a bow across a violin; the same entrance of the musicians like rabbits coming through a hole; the same deafening applause at the appearance of the conductor; the same quick turn and flopping bow that people respond to hysterically; the same sudden hushed silence; the same high, passionate opening bars of the opera, instantly fixing everyone in rapt anticipatory attention.

In one of the boxes a striking-looking man, with a noticeable grace of manner, and somewhat haughty bearing as well, haughty in the sense of innate aloofness, and of a slightly disdainful but highly intellectual countenance, was bending, with a somewhat impassioned gesture, to take from the shoulders of a beautiful young woman, so evidently in his care, so evidently, in fact, his possession, a conspicuously splendid evening wrap.

Even the most unwary could not fail of the fact that the two referred to were none other than Mr. Stanwood Lamarque and his bride of a summer and a fall. And if the unwary one were a person given in any sense to mental ramblings, he might, and that quickly, even maybe with a certain sense of regret, recall the forgotten—and yet who can say?—absent moralist who could so easily have been the one to take that self-same wrap, or another, from those self-same lovely

shoulders. He might, too, even fancy the owner of the lovely shoulders, as the soft strains of ravishing music, music so calculated to awaken dreams or memories, giving a thought to that self-ostracized one whom we must ever think of now as poor Lightfoot, F. F. V.

It is quite certain that Mr. Lamarque does not begrudge her the stray thought, or even a stolen tear, or even, in fact, the flitting of a perfect face, and that so unexpectedly, at times, between his own and hers? All this might be said

to pertain wholly to her soul, and if Mr. Lamarque—as we know she had more than once confided to him—could never reach her soul, he had certainly, equally according to him, never wanted to! And who shall say, provided he could have reached it, what poor Lightfoot, F. F. V., would have done, after all, with such a soul?

How safe, then, to leave lovely Vivian, even with a tear for her in our eye, in the hands of her worldly guardian and, granting his standpoint, worthy husband, Mr. Stanwood Lamarque!



HOME

By David Morton

WE have watched the sunlight on the gleaming hills, And changing shadows blown along the wheat; Gazed into canyons that deep silence fills, And felt world-trampling winds strike keen and sweet From far earth-ends into our laughing faces (Brushing a brown strand down across your brow); And we have stood in high and vasty places, Awed by a great, unknowing fear. And now . . .

Lamplight and quiet and the close-walled room,
Nearness and smallness and our casual way:
You—smiling there from out the dim-lit gloom,
And I—too glad of you for words to say . . .
The world is wide—we have sped fast and far;
But this, how good! How near and dear you are:



A MARRIED man is one who has allowed his discretion to run away with his judgment.



THE heart is a machine for making miracles.

EMPHASIS

By Zoë Beckley

He was a man of unique personality. To him life was an amusing game. All human beings were his comrades. No experience brought him surprise. He understood motives, actions, results. Men were his brothers. Women loved him, sometimes preyed upon him, occasionally laughed at him. But none escaped him. Whether the woman were wife, sweetheart, playmate, parasite, victim or friend, once having known him, she never ceased to depend on him. In one way or another, she always came back.

A woman he loved left him and married. He smiled a little. She laughed merrily. She was free of him, no longer needed him, was rich, happy. She was so very happy that she was reluctant to talk of her happiness. It seemed unnecessary, vulgar. It was enough just to be so happy.

She came one day to see the Man.

"Are you happy?" he asked.

She smiled casually, shrugging her shoulders—she did not like to admit how deeply, almost abjectly happy she was.

"Oh, yes," she smiled, "we get on."
And when she had gone the Man looked grave.

"She is supremely happy," he said, narrowing his eyes. "She no longer needs me."

A year later she came again. "Are you happy?" asked the Man.

"Gloriously happy!" the Woman cried, clasping her hands till the knuckles showed white, and closing her great dark eyes. "My marriage is a wonderful thing! I never dreamed how happy, how completely satisfied, I could be. Love is a miracle!"

And when she had gone the Man smiled.

"She will soon come back," he said. "She needs me."



TWILIGHT SONG

By Muna Lee

I CANNOT think of you by day—
There is a restless infinity of people,
I cannot think of you by night—
The stars are too insistent.

At dusk in a green wood where the broaden

At dusk in a green wood where the breeze comes whispering to the little leaves—There I might think of you.



WE WERE IN THE SMOKING-ROOM

By William F. Jenkins

"THEY say," remarked Cary, "that when two men come together, they talk of business, but that when there are three or more together, they talk of women."

He was a motion-picture actor with a singularly perfect profile and a small

but well-trained moustache.

I sighed.

"Not always," I protested out of the depths of my experience; "sometimes

they talk of baseball."

We were in the smoking-room of a liner going down the coast. Besides Cary and myself there were Marden, one of the few great motion-picture actors; Hayne, a lieutenant in our army on his way to Porto Rico; Hamilton, who was an insurance salesman, and "The Old Gent." "The Old Gent" claimed to have been in the same state of intoxication for thirty-five years, and to have been a friend and intimate of the late Colonel Pat Sheedy. He now spoke up, apropos of nothing in particular.

"'Tell you what, Rochester's a nice town. I took the Keeley cure there twice, but they won't let me come back, now. I run off with a li'l widow up there. Took her all aroun' the State. Y'know they can't do nothin' to you 'nless you go out of the State."

We were silent a moment.

"There are women, and women," observed Marden sagely. "I never knew a woman could appreciate the demands of a man's profession, until a very little while ago. Not long ago, I was married. My wife loved me,—too much. She hindered my artistic development by her affection. An artist of any sort cannot develop in an atmosphere of

perfect comfort. He must suffer to advance. And she loved me. I was degenerating, rapidly becoming one of the mass of film-players who heave once for love, twice for hate, and roll their eyes. I was becoming popular! Can I name a worse fate for an actor?"

"Yes," remarked Carey, "you might

name fat."

"My wife saw my deterioration. She saw the dimming of my art, the slow approach of self-satisfaction, with its accompaniment of artistic oblivion. She loved me. She knew I loved her. She left me."

"I don't understand," said Hamilton.
"He means," explained Cary, carefully feeling his moustache, "that she knew he would become mediocre unless he had a shock. She knew that suffering in any form would renew his artistic ability. So she left him, trusting to his emotional suffering to make him once more a great actor."

He looked gravely at his cigar, without commenting on the accuracy or inaccuracy of Marden's analysis of her motives. The waiter approached.

"Rye," said the lieutenant. We all

ordered.

"But you never can tell about women," said Hamilton bromidically. "I had a cousin, once. She married a man named Mor—Maw—I've forgotten his name, but she left him because she didn't like his table manners. She left him, and that was all the explanation she ever gave the family."

I called to mind a conversation I had had with a charming woman the

summer before.

"A woman once told me," I offered, "that she left her husband because he

was everything he should be, and knew it. What was worse, he bragged of it. It got her into some embarrassing predicaments. Imagine being caught kissing her own husband, in a conservatory!

It ruined her socially."

"I knew a woman," observed Cary, "who left her husband because a man she was in love with would have nothing to do with her. It's a fact! Her husband was hopelessly conceited, and she fell in love with this other chap. He, er, he is a sort of relative of mine, and asked me to help him out. She wanted him to run off with her—"

"Should of called me in," said "The Old Gent" genially. "I'd of done it for

her."

The waiter approached.

"Rye," said the lieutenant. We all ordered.

"My friend wouldn't run off with her," said Cary, reflectively. "I don't know why. He liked the girl all right, only he happened to be in love with one of the extra women at the studio who was badly gone on the star. Quite a funny mix-up. The woman who ran off in love with a man who was in love with another woman who was in love with another man who was married to the first woman. So she ran off by herself. At least I suppose she did. She went to visit her family up in New York State. And when her husband inquired for her, her family said she had left and they didn't know where she was. Quite close-mouthed about it, they were. I suppose she told them a tale about being abused and all that."

"The Old Gent" beamed upon us.
"That li'l widow up in Rochester,"
he confided, "she wasn' a regular
widow. Jus' a grass widow. I don'
know what she saw in me," he wriggled

in an attempt at bashfulness, "but she was expensive. She must've got two thousan' out of me, I guess."

"That woman I was talking about, borrowed five hundred from my—er relative when she ran off," said

Cary.

I thought of three hundred and fifty "loaned" to my fair confidante of the summer before, and groaned inwardly, but said nothing.

"My cousin," said Hamilton, the insurance agent, reluctantly, "gathered eight hundred among the members of the family to finance her divorce pro-

ceedings."

The lieutenant put down his latest glass. He had not been listening to our talk.

"Your name is Marden," he said suddenly to the motion-picture star; "I know your wife. I know where she is. She is getting a divorce. And when she gets a divorce she is going to marry me!"

He strode to the door as Marden gasped.

"What!" Marden exclaimed, "you know where Ella is?"

"The Old Gent" looked up.

"Ella," he beamed.

Cary started.

"Ella!" he half-shouted at "The Old Gent."

Hamilton lay back and closed his eyes.

"Ella!" he murmured faintly.

"Ella!" I gulped.

The lieutenant strode out the door. Marden tottered after him, pleading for the whereabouts of his wife. We turned to each other. "The Old Gent" lifted his glass.

"Here's to Ella," he said genially.

We drank.



WISDOM is the sense of humor of despair.



CELESTIAL CROWNS

By Wyndham Martyn

N later years Murray was never able to understand why on that night of all nights he was led to discover himself to Curtis and open his soul to one whom he had never liked. He grew to blame fate for the mood into which a successful day at the races and a triumphant week in the stock market had led him. As a rule suspicious, and as sparing in his speech as his charities, he found himself after his day of success endowed with a sense of superiority that sought an outlet in conversa-

After a dinner at his club he went into the smoking room and sank into a luxurious chair and lighted a cigar. There was in his kind the desire to talk. It rapidly grew into a wish to give advice preferably to some less successful member of the club. This is the inalienable right of the man who has arrived when exercised at the expense of some one not yet in sight of his goal. The cigar had been smoked almost to its crimson and golden band-Murray was never averse to advertising the price of his cigars—ere a victim strolled in to be offered on the altar of unnecessary counsel.

"Come in, Curtis," Murray called, fearing the newcomer was about to depart. "Had dinner?"

Curtis was a man of thirty-five, dark in coloring and tanned to a golden bronze from a life spent mainly out of doors. He regarded the older man in the leathern chair without perceptible "Thanks," he answered, enthusiasm. "I've dined already."

"Sit down," Murray commanded, and indicated a chair, "I want to have a

talk with you."

Curtis looked at him fixedly but remained standing. To one who knew him there was a trace of hostility in his "Well," he returned shortly, what is it?"

"Take a cigar," Murray insisted, and

passed his case.

"I'm smoking already, thanks," Curtis said, and sensed the other's disapproval. Murray was the kind of man who could not understand that, to some, a rare Egyptian cigarette may be preferable to all the leaves grown under Cuban suns.

"I saw you at Piping Rock to-day," Murray remarked. "Have a good

day?"

"I didn't win any money, if that's what you mean," Curtis returned.

"Good Lord, man!" Murray cried impatiently. "What else do you suppose I'd bother to go there for? What did you back in the third race?"

"Sirdar," Curtis answered idly.

"I had a thousand on the winner at fifteen," Murray cried proudly. made fifteen thousand."

"That's my yearly income," Curtis observed. "To him that hath shall be

"Given nothing," Murray retorted. "I had sense and you hadn't.

did you back Sirdar?"

"I liked his looks," Curtis said, smil-"He was like the first horse I ever had, a big chestnut with two white stockings."

"And you backed him on his looks!"

Murray snorted.

"He'll win yet," Curtis said. "What

made you back the winner?"

Murray had been waiting for this. "I'll tell you," he said. 'It was an im-

ported horse and not very much was known about him. I spent fifty dollars in finding out all about him from a Newmarket stable boy who looks after the horse. I found out what sort of a track he liked, his distance and a hundred other things—and I turned my fifty into fifteen thousand. That's my way of doing things, Curtis. why I have made as much in an afternoon as you get in a year. Curtis, you are wasting your time."

"Your kindly interest cheers me," Curtis remarked. "May I ask if this

is a new discovery?"

"I knew your father," Murray re-

turned impressively.

"A fortunate acquaintance for you if report speaks truly." The younger man smiled faintly and dropped into a chair.

Murray waved a fat, bediamonded hand in a manner that was meant to be deprecatory. "You are thinking I might have averted his failure. Possibly I might, but business is business."

"I suppose it is—with you," Curtis said slowly. "He gave you your start in life and came to your rescue more than once and yet you were content to let him die in relative poverty. Why advertise the nobility of your nature?"

Murray stared at him with no trace Had Curtis been his of resentment. equal in wealth he might have resented such an imputation, but to the rich and successful the poor are always God's fools and he regarded him-only with

"Your father failed because he trusted people and was not so completely given up to business as he should have

"God be thanked!" the younger man

cried softly.

Murray frowned and regarded him with severe air. He had sometimes felt Curtis had not for him the respect which is the rich man's right. He had never understood the younger Curtis.

"I disapprove of you," he declared. "You do nothing but enjoy yourself."

"And why not?" Curtis demanded. "It may be the highest good when taken

at one's own expense. You, too, do nothing but enjoy yourself at the expense of others. The papers tell me of your triumphs. Last month they were full of your collieries and the strike which you broke at the expense merely of a few widows and orphans. Your face tells me you enjoyed winning that unequal fight."
"I did," Murray admitted. "I fight

to win-always."

"If there's a day of reckoning for enjoyments—mine and yours, Murray —I know who will be assessed the higher."

"Are you a socialist?" Murray demanded. "It is fashionable among the more ignorant of our idle rich.'

"I am not," Curtis snapped. "Better men than you and I have been, but I've been trained to think of it as something bad. I'm not sure that my vision of it is right. I'm not a socialist, but I don't like your way of doing business."

Murray waved socialism aside and came back to his personal prejudices.

"I despise the class to which you belong-the idle poor. Your brother is a totally different type of man. He will be a power in the land financially."

Curtis yawned. "So he tells me. He was always a utilitarian. A utilitarian," he explained, "is a man who borrows something from another and makes use of it."

"But you might be doing the same thing," Murray persisted. "They say you are brighter than he is."

"I trust not," Curtis smiled.

"I mean it," Murray exclaimed. "I'm told you have ability along some lines that don't count for much in a money sense. My wife tells me you sing extremely well and Pierpoint once said you knew more about intaglios, whatever they are, than any man of your age anywhere." Unconsciously his voice took on a touch of reverence, for he was discussing the opinion of a man to whom even the greatest deferred.

"You are not proposing to take me into partnership by any chance?" Cur-

tis asked satirically.

Murray reddened. "I only wanted to point out that your brother must be

worth-"

"I know, I know," Curtis cried impatiently. "I get it from him, too. He's worthy of your respect, but I have all I need. I have two rooms and a bath over a florist's shop in Fifth avenue, and just such other little homes in Paris and Rome and chambers in the Albany in London. I can wander over the globe at will and never need to borrow carfare from my consul. Wall Street can panic as it will without disturbing me."

"But haven't you any ambitions?"

Murray asked with pity.

"Ambitions?" the younger cried. "Ambitions? Why, man, I'm full of them. It may be that some of them

even clash with your own."

He looked down on the gross, heavy body filling the great chair and saw on the self-indulgent face the fatuous smile of perfect contentment and the hostility that had been faint before was more strongly marked. Murray, becoming conscious of it, assumed a new dignity.

"Some day," he remarked with condescension, "I may hear of your ambi-

tions."

"Some day you will," Curtis said

steadily.

Murray could always bring himself into a state of good humor by reflecting on his wealth and he presently reverted to it. He knew he could never achieve the social popularity that was the lot of Curtis nor attain to that ease of manner which was his by reason of birth and education, but he could flaunt before him his herd of golden calves.

"Money," he chanted, closing his eyes, "money is everything. It allows me to buy things you can hardly afford

to look at."

"Very likely," Curtis admitted indifferently, "but the really big fellows could say the same of you. You are rated at ten millions, they tell me. If Carnegie found himself in such reduced circumstances do you suppose

there would be any more libraries for distribution? And would Rockefeller continue to endow seats of learning if he were as poor as you? You know they wouldn't. Relatively, Murray, you are as poor as I am."

Murray was stung to activity at such pretensions of equality. He found himself vehemently anxious to prove his case. He assumed the patronizing

air.

"My money," he commenced, "allows me all the luxuries of the rich. Yours does not. I can secure the highest happiness."

Curtis lighted another cigarette. "And your idea of the highest happi-

ness?" he asked.

"There are innumerable instances.

Take married life, for instance."

Curtis looked at him keenly and for a moment said nothing. "Well," he demanded after a pause. "What of happiness and married life?"

"This much," Murray returned. "To win the woman you want you need money: to hold her you need more. Jewels, fine dresses, furs, carriages and

houses."

"I see," Curtis answered, "the five ways of love—jewels, fine dresses, furs, carriages and houses. Is there no

more?'

"That's enough," Murray declared earnestly. "A woman wants love and respect, and it's a damn sight easier to love and respect the good provider than the man who can't give her the necessary luxuries. Take yourself, Curtis, what could you give a woman? Do you know what good furs cost, or how much you have to pay for rubies?"

His own wife had superlatively rare furs and the rubies she wore to advertise his wealth had in other days graced

royal throats.

"The woman I love won't want those luxuries," Curtis said, and his face took on a softer look. "Perhaps there are those who may be indifferent to your five ways. Perhaps there are other ways to make them happy."

"You mean romance and that sort of

nonsense," Murray said contemptuously. "When they're young they may like sentimentality and so on, but that don't last! Personally I'm against it in married life."

"So you'd rob them of their celestial

crowns?"

"What are you talking about?" Murray demanded impatiently. "Who said

anything about crowns?"

"Meredith says, somewhere, that 'the young who avoid the region of romance escape the title of fool at the expense

of a celestial crown,"

"What Meredith was that?" Murray asked. He knew a Meredith who had grain elevators and many millions, but he hardly supposed him capable of coining such nonsense as this.

"A writer merely," Curtis told him, "and a dead one at that, but not unknown to some. I interrupted you in your discourse on women and ro-

mance."

"It's like this," Murray went on, not unflattered at the interest he was arousing. "Girls fall in love; women grow out of it."

"You treat it as an epidemic disease, Something less than measles

and more than mumps?"

"Hardly that," the capitalist returned, "but it's overrated. They tell me you sing rather well. I'd bet most of your songs are about love, mushy, silly songs. Am I right?"

"They are generally love songs," Curtis admitted, "but some have words

that are immortal."

"They don't win respect," Murray contended. "Money and the power it brings alone win a woman's respect. The wife who respects her husband alone is happy."

"I think you're right," Curtis told "A woman can only love the man who has the power to make her un-

happy as well as happy."

Murray stroked his heavy chin complacently. "I'm married," he asserted, 'and you are not. I know. You don't. This romance nonsense ought not to be encouraged. I put my foot down on it. Let me tell you something, Curtis.

Happy married life is founded on re-

spect and suspicion."

Curtis looked at him again in silence. "What do you mean by suspicion?" he said presently.

"The exercise of a proper care as to whom your wife knows, where she

goes and what she does."

"Admirable!" Curtis said. "Admirable! I must not forget that. And have these methods been successful in

your own ménage?"

"Should I be telling you about my failures?" Murray said simply. trust nobody. When I married a woman twenty years my junior, I knew I was doing what might prove a risky thing. I studied the situation out as I would a business proposition. I gave her all the money she needed-but I found out how it was spent."

"It sounds horrible," Curtis cried, "a business basis for married life! Let me tell you something, Murray. Women don't want your treatment. They want sentiment. You've lost your ce-

lestial crown."

"Mrs. Murray was like that once," he admitted. "I told her it was a dangerous thing to cultivate. I discouraged it. We respect each other. There is not a better hostess in New York than my wife, as you know. I respect her for that, Curtis."

Curtis blew three perfect smoke rings into the air. He pointed them out to the other. "Your respect reminds me of them," he said. "At a short distance it may seem important but it doesn't last any more than those rings. See the quaint shapes they take as they dissolve into thin

"I confess," Murray cried, "that I don't understand what you're driving

at."

"That need not disturb you," Curtis assured him. "Why need one of the busy rich seek to comprehend the idle poor? Tell me more of your domestic spy system."

"It is not a spy system," Murray objected vigorously. "I have only exer-

cised a befitting care."

"And Mrs. Murray—does she know of it?"

"If she did she would never question any arrangement of mine. You evidently don't understand women or you would be a more successful man. You are a friend of Mrs. Murray's and she rather likes you. But although she's too kind to let you know it, underneath it all there's a certain contempt. Could you give her, as I did, a splendid steam yacht for a birthday present? Could you, with all your little cleverness, keep her in the luxury I do? Not if you lived for a million years! Women of her type can't exist without luxuries. They are won by money. Their mothers train 'em to hunt for money. They do it in a well-bred manner and you wouldn't notice it if you weren't wise to the social game. Curtis, why don't you pick out a wealthy woman and marry her? You've got a name and rich relatives and you could do it. There's nothing like respect and the comforts of home, after all."

"I'm afraid all this respect would make me uncomfortable," the younger said and smiled faintly. "I may not be as worthy of it as you suppose, and then, again, I'm not sufficiently a man of business to run my domestic affairs

as ably as you do."

"If you are wise you'll remember

what I say," Murray advised.

Curtis rose from his chair. "I'm

glad to have had this talk with you," he said quietly. "There had been certain doubts in my mind about—oh, about things in general and more particularly about wives and husbands and the conduct of home and the inner meaning of happiness. Murray, you've helped me more than you know."

The financier tried to restrain a certain gratification from irradiating his face. "I hope," he said, impressively, "that you will take my advice."

* * * * *

Not many hours later a woman and man looked over the side of a liner bound for distant seas and saw the tall buildings of New York grow fainter and merge at last with the white skyline.

"Dearest," the man whispered, "if ever I had a doubt about my right to take you away from him it was dispelled last night. I could have struck him as he sat there prating about your respect for him."

He paused as some promenaders

passed by.

"He thought you loved only jewels and fine gowns and the rustle of a bankbook's leaves." He pressed a kiss on her hair. "I can't give you all those wonderful things. Are you sorry?"

"Sorry?" she repeated softly. "Sorry? After five years of purgatory to

be in heaven. Am I sorry?"



NEXT

By S. M. Herzig

HE lay back oblivious to everything except the white-clad form that hovered above him. He expected something, yet he did not know just what.

Softly a snowy arm drooped about his neck, and he felt the gentlest caresses on lip and cheeks. His tense body quivered throughout; he pressed his eyes closed in ecstasy.

He was only seventeen, and this was his first—shave.



WOMEN I HAVE KNOWN

By James Shannon

THE woman who believes in nothing, denies the existence of a moral code, affirms that the will of the individual is supreme, and then objects to a kiss in the dark because it is not proper; the woman who raves over Gogol, Gorki, Tolstoi, and the rest, without having read "Hamlet"; the woman who once lived three months in Paris; the intellectual woman who likes to talk of "serious" things, inevitably swinging the conversation around to "souls"; the woman with thick ankles

who wears short skirts, likewise the flat-chested woman who wears evening gowns cut extremely low; the woman who reads Tagore, but who would sniff disdainfully at mention of his name if he had been born in Brooklyn; the woman who loses her temper on a hot day; and some thousands of women who wear shoes three sizes too small for them, chew gum, think they look like Maxine Elliott, and believe that they are unappreciated by their husbands.



THE ANSWER

By Orrick Johns

"C RYING cranes and wheeling crows I'll remember them," she said; ... "And I will be your own, God knows, And the sin be on my head.

"I will be your own and glad;
Lovers would be fools to care
How a thing is good or bad,
When the sky is everywhere . . ."

"I will be your own," she said,
"Because your voice is like the rain,
And your kiss is wine and bread,
Better than my father's grain."

So I took her where she spoke,

Breasts of snow and burning mouth.

Crying cranes and drifting smoke,

And the blackbirds wheeling south.

THE FOX WEARS VINE LEAVES

By Mrs. Cheever-Meredith

S Mrs. Simon Craven waited for her husband she was unconscious of any premonition, or of the approach of that for which she was perhaps more prepared than she knew.

She was in a small room which opened off from a square landing half-way down the flight of a winding stairway. Two things engaged her attention—the clock, which clearly indicated that the hour for dinner had passed, and a mirror, which reflected, among other less interesting objects, the three or four lower steps of that part of the stairway which led up to the floor above. She unconsciously associated these with the man who would soon be coming down to her from his dressing-room.

At forty she was never in haste, however, feeling that there was then no escape from that which was to be; and also no novelty to be met half-way. She was so certain of this that at that hour she waited for the usual thing to happen, which was exactly that which she was never to know again.

Hearing the ghost of a sound, she saw at the same moment the gleam of patent-leather shoes reflected in the mirror, and then the slim legs, bending alternately at the knees, as their owner descended the stairs. Turning, she saw her husband enter the room, a spare figure in black relieved only by a generous expanse of white shirt front, which was surmounted by a blandly smiling and handsome, if too red, face.

He did not say: "Sorry to have kept you waiting!" as she had expected he would do, nor did he ring for the carriage.

In place of doing either of these things, he sank into an armchair which faced her own upon the rug before the fire. His odd manner suggested that he was wearing his vine-leaves with less than his usual grace. The juice of the grapes had been too well mixed. He had the air of a somewhat middle-aged centaur whose hoofs were correctly encased in patent leather. His wife found herself wondering over the miracle which had enabled him to change so successfully to a dinner costume without the assistance of a valet, but it was increasingly evident that the energy which had made this possible was now leaving him.

She said to herself: "Poor old Si!"

She pitied his foolish smile, a smile which apologized, implored and seemed to say, "You see how it is, my dear! I have taken too much. I have not drawn as fine a line as I have previously been enabled to do. Now . . . what is to be done about it?"

He sat in the chair opposite her own with the manner of one who had no hope of rising from it again. There was a finality about his defeat. It was so pitiable a sight that his wife felt a sudden rush of unfamiliar affection flood her heart, a feeling unknown to her for some years. It was as if he again had need of her. She knew that he had a peculiar nature which held him aloof from others, and that she was perhaps the only living soul which he had ever permitted to approach him closely.

Through his present need she was to enter his life more intimately once more. Again she was to be necessary to him.

She knew that, long ago, he had loved her after his fashion. His selfishness had at that time closely resembled unselfishness. It was only after the years had cooled his infatuation for her as a woman that she had understood how far he had loved her for herself.

To-night, as she saw him helplessly confessing in every line of his lax form tnat he had need of a friend, she experienced the shock of a renewed hope. He had given ten years of his life to her in their youth, and then he had given ten years to wine. The latter had now betrayed him, and in his shame he was turning once more to her, a damaged article, it was true, but still . . . hers . . . a something to cherish . . . to shield from a cruel criticism . . . to fill her empty life with a right purpose. For if he had lost the control over his appetite to the extent illustrated by his present attitude, it would happen again. Yes . . . he would need her. This had come to her. It was her trouble, and she must bear it.

She studied his face only to discover that, with an absurd gravity, he was

studying hers.

She dismissed her impulse of ridicule and contempt, in order to ask herself if the first ten years of their married life had not prepared the weakness of the ten which had followed, those which were to end in that which was before her. She had floated comfortably upon the tide of his adoration, and had profited by it. What was the soft and exquisite appropriateness of her entire environment but a sort of price? Was not each one of her rare books, of her wonderful collection of etchings and prints, but a proof of the justice of her present self-accusation?

Simon had cared for none of these things, yet he had given them to her, or had encouraged her to buy

Had she not the spoils of his love for her, and had he not been left by her to walk in darkness? She had not tried to raise him to higher things. She had watched him from her height with curiosity, as one might study the strange habits of some wild animal.

And as for his present danger . . . had she not waited until the actual catastrophe was upon him before making such high resolves as occupied her at that moment? Obscure memories, long relegated to the camphor of her dead dreams, came to flit in a weird phantasmagoria before her imagination, haunting her, and crying aloud that she was a criminal.

She arose and threw aside the operacloak in which she had huddled as if in her guilt. She went to the bell and rang, watched in every move by the fiery blue eyes of the downfallen one. Those eyes shone with cunning and observed carefully, although the body of the man was a mere hulk, inert, power-

A servant appeared in the doorway, and Mrs. Craven explained the inexplicable, as he later remarked downstairs, for the carriage was to be countermanded, and a "supper" was to be served before the fire in the formal boudoir.

As she passed and repassed the man who so helplessly regarded her, she paused once to touch his hair lightly with a nervous hand, an unusual caress, which he acknowledged with a guttural growl intended to express his satisfaction.

She determined that he should be able to sit where he was until, after the household had been dismissed for the night, she might herself help him to reach his room. She would manage it all in such a way that the servants should not know that he had surpassed by so grave a line his usual indulgence. She felt a passionate pity for him.

She told herself that her old love, strangely bidden, had returned.

II.

THE servant came and went.

Foreseeing the probable incapacity of her companion, she ordered with discretion, contriving to give a meaning to the circle of white damask and an ex-

cuse for the presence of the porcelain and crystal by asking for a few things, hot or cold, and sweet or sour. When the simple feast had been laid, Mrs. Craven dismissed the man, for she was determined that no critical eyes should witness the scene. She felt that, in a way, that evening was to determine the stuff of such years as were left to them. She began at once to wait upon her husband with tenderness. After all, such a weakness was pathological more than moral. She thought that he might manage some hot bouillon, but he showed no interest in seconding her efforts. He cast a glazed and unrecognizing glance at a tartine de caviar, and his wife ended by eating that and another like it herself. Appetite had returned to her in a measure, following upon her assumption of a part of the responsibility for his state. In her humble acceptance of this she became almost cheerful.

To-morrow they would talk. Tonight she would sit there near him, and let him feel—if it were within his power to feel—that she was kind.

That he had already realized her solicitude, and had warmed toward her, was soon evident. After several hiccoughs he said as if with the generous intention to offer a compliment:

"You . . . you . . . should have had

children, Jinnie!"

After he had thus spoken he closed his eyes, going away from her, shutting her out, in the curious way possible to each living human being. He retired within himself. It was almost as if he had closed a door in her face.

She should have had children!

He said that! He!

From the first he had never wanted children. He had only wanted her.

She stared at the mouth which had spoken. It was apparently clamped fast. Yet she fancied that there was a flicker of humour about its rectangular lines. She made no comment upon his words, but regarded him steadily. This was the man with whom she had lived all these years. He and she were of the same age. Both had outlived youth. The father had never been developed

in him. He was the male more than the man.

If there had been children!

He had needed a woman to be wise for him, and she had been merely fond and foolish. She saw that as a wife she had been a failure. She wallowed in her relief as she became more and more convinced of her own faults.

She sank into a penitential reverie from which she was aroused by a sudden consciousness that her husband was again awake, and that he was watching her with eyes that had become dully observant.

Simon Craven was exercising a desire to be amiable. He had seemed to feel subconsciously the beautiful lenient quality of his wife's thoughts. He was saying to himself that Jinnie was a good sort. But she did not understand men. It was not her fault. She was made that way.

Mingled with the fumes of alcohol were the fantasies of appreciation. His brain was like a dell where fairy-like good impulses danced amid a fog with certain secret demons born of appetite. It was hard to disentangle the one from the other, and present the right ideas by means of speech to his wife. He felt very keenly her mental incompetence. For example, she had never been known to keep a secret. She was not like him.

She was a goose. Yes, she was a goose. This thought delighted him. As for himself, he knew what he was. He was a fox. He felt highly pleased with this aspect of his qualities, and became suddenly maudlin in his pity for his wife. He decided to permit to her a glimpse of his amazing astuteness.

She sat opposite him, waiting, measuring her first premonition, a queer sick feeling impelling her to cry out:

"Don't, Si! Don't!"

But she said nothing. Miserable, her courage ebbing, she continued to regard him as he sat much hunched up, loosely huddled in his clothes, his arms lying out along the arms of his chair, his hands grasping the leather with an attempt at muscular command, those hands which were perhaps a most sig-

nificant revelation of his character because of the fact that their ugliness was very animal. Sensuality of a low sort was suggested by their every line. She had never liked his hands, not even when her first love for him had filled her heart, and the woman who does not like a man's hands does not like the man. She had loved him. She was loving him with a tender pity at that moment, but she did not like him.

She looked from them to his face. He had been, and still was, a handsome man. But during the years his features had hardened, and his mouth coarsened. His brow was very fine. Nothing that he had done had changed that. His eyes, abnormally bright at that moment, were of a metallic blue, and set far apart. His nose was small with wide nostrils, the nostrils of a faun. His lips were broadly curved and heavy. His teeth were very white and strong, but his rare smile was cruel, or had become so during the ten years he had given to wine.

It was this mouth she watched now, fascinated yet loathing. Swollen by his over indulgence, hideously red, parched, it was set in an evil smile which seemed to boast, to proclaim the arrogance which, with him, accompanied his condition. He was wetting his lips with his tongue as a paralytic sometimes does before attempting the effort of speech.

Again she felt her impulsion to cry out, to forbid his putting into words that which she saw he had in mind to say. And again she was silent.

It was he who spoke. "Your Si's an old fox!" he announced slowly, in a steadily modulated voice.

She waited, as if facing torture, with a fear she could not explain.

After a further moistening of his stiff lips the man before her repeated his words. He was an old fox. The fact, or his belief in it, seemed to afford him no end of satisfaction.

He gloated over his wife as if with a lofty and appreciative affection. As if grateful for her kind intentions, strangely aware of her hope to be his comrade in a new and broader way, he seemed determined upon some confidence, a confidence which he was about to force upon her genially, as he might have inflicted it upon some old and tried man friend. And from the leer in the drink-dulled eyes she saw that he had in mind some history, bacchantic or even Rabelaisian.

She knew then, finally, that she was in the presence of that which was to alter all of her future life. She glanced at the clock exactly as a mourner does who looks to see the hour at the moment when death has had his way with some beloved being. It was ten minutes to nine.

Her heart hardened. "A fox!" she murmured flatteringly, and laughed to encourage further confidence.

His eyes gleamed and held her gaze relentlessly while he chuckled, hiccoughed, and repeated his boast. And this time he added further information.

He said: "From first to last I've played the game, and kept the secret." "Being a fox!" She murmured with

"Being a fox!" She murmured with a ghastly humour which pleased him, and led him on.

"Have I ever"—here he managed to lean forward in his chair for the first time—"have I ever given anythin' away?"

"You never have," she acquiesced.

She let her thoughts rove backward over the weary years. His look of secrecy! How often it had puzzled her. It was now accounted for, although Simon had as yet said so little. She was to hear more. She knew that nothing was to save her from it. And she no longer wished to be saved. She decided to empty his mind of the facts as effectually as if they had been the contents of a teapot.

He was looking about him as if wishing for something which his troubled brain could not recall. Subconsciously he wanted tobacco. She arose quickly, afraid that the new idea might put him off from his mood of making her his confidant, and got the case of cigars which he had left in the room. She gave it to him and then helped him to select one. She lighted a match for

him, but he made no attempt to utilize it, and she threw it into the grate.

He sat, fumbling the tight roll of tawny weed between his stubby fingertips, and she saw that his mood of selfrevelation evoked by her complaisance, and made possible by the cloud upon his brain, swayed him completely. He was enjoying it, gloating over that which he was about to confide.

He nodded sagely, and then looked straight into her eyes as he said with

a naïve air:

"I don't care a damn about her. You must know that, Jinnie! I never have. You're all right, my dear. But you're too high and mighty for me. There's a lot of tommy-rot about your ideals. A live man wants a woman, a human being—not a spirit."

"Ah!"

"And he wants t' feel that t'isn't all on his side. D'you understand?"

"Perfectly."

"You aren't hurt, are you?" he asked with a sudden anxiety.

"No."

"That's the stuff! You always were

straight goods."

He sighed with relief, and leaned back heavily once more into his chair, brooding, considering, and for a moment silent.

Aroused now by all that was feminine in her, his wife felt that he must not be allowed to retreat into that labyrinth of mind, that hiding place, which it is the privilege of each human being to possess. She determined to drag his secret from him.

"Does a man tell his men friends of such little affairs?" she asked as if musingly, and impressed by his astuteness.

"I don't," he replied in a thick voice. Then, spurred to further confidences by a sense of her admiration, he added: "I lie. They question me. But I lie. I know all about them, though. I hold some of them in the hollow of my hand. If they knew . . . they daren't squeal

If they knew . . . they daren't squeal . . . but all they know about me won't do them much good. She never leaves town on the same day I do. If she goes

on Sunday . . . I go on Monday. See?"

She murmured the word: "Fox!"

"Or if we leave on the same day," he hiccoughed solemnly, "we don't go by the same train. Most always I leave on Saturday . . . half past four from the Grand Central . . . she follows . . . She's sharp, too . . . she is." He smiled knowingly.

"And her husband?"

It seemed to Mrs. Craven that a voice she had never heard asked the question. In some way which she did not try to explain she was certain that her husband alluded to a married woman.

"Gad! He doesn't count. To begin with he's an ass. She's fooled him for years. I'm not the first, Jinnie. I believe . . . as men go . . . I'm pretty square. I've led no woman astray. I've no patience with that sort of thing," he insisted with a virtuous air.

His wife patted the hand which held the cigar. "One feels that about you, Si," she protested. "But what is her name?" she asked in a careless tone.

The man hesitated, and she feared that the crowning pleasure of this interview was to be withheld from her.

But he told it. Quite simply, as if giving the title of some book, he spoke.

For a moment she stared at a wheel which revolved so rapidly that she could not distinguish the spokes. A little later they revealed themselves as legs terminating in shining patent leather, and black cloth sleeves finished at each end by white cuffs and red hairy hands.

Slowly and more slowly the spokes revolved until, the wheel coming to a rest, the feet attached themselves to a rug, and the hands to the arms of a chair

And throughout this episode a something within herself was crying out in amazement.

The name had been that of one whom she had never seen, but of whom she had heard him speak as a woman with whom he came in touch during business hours, briefly, from time to time. It could not be said that she had never

thought of her, but if she had, it was as some worthy and hard-working person who had a right to her respect.

So it was she! That woman!

Not a friend with whom he had been thrown through the intimate associations of their own world! Not an enchantress of stage life! But a person who bravely paid a toll of toil during one-half of her dual existence, while in the other she deceived a husband probably as industrious as herself!

She looked at her husband searchingly, quite as if she then saw him for the first time in her life. She saw that temptation had approached him from that side of life of which wives know so little. He perhaps suffered through He might feel humiliated, when himself. And was it not possible that this was the reason of his miserable failing. Men drink to forget their chagrin, their pain, a thing women have not yet learned to do.

And the woman who, although dignified by labor, stooped to an illicit and disgusting intrigue, might she not per-

haps suffer also?

She asked in a feeble tone:

she love you, Si?"

She almost hoped that he might assent. A little love on one side or the other, and the thing would become understandable.

He had sunk away from her into the lethargy of wine and warmth. But he aroused himself, horrified.

"Love!" He mouthed the word. "Who said an'thin' 'bout love?"

"She . . . she is perhaps . . . un-

happy?"
"What!" he bellowed, his eyes sparkling with temper. "Why, Jin . she's as hard as nails! She's not that sort! You can't hurt these red-haired women with sharp noses!"

He relapsed into silence, occupied

with his memories.

In spite of her misery his wife glanced at her own reflection in the mirror. She bore no resemblance to a redhaired woman with a sharp nose. And she felt that she was not as hard as nails. Yet her husband found more to

attract him in the other type. She then and there gave up any attempt to analyze the mysterious nature of man.

The man in the chair became suddenly aware of a stern voice which seemed to be repeating a short sen-

tence at regular intervals.

It could not be Jinnie's voice which was saying in such a spiteful tone: "See if you can go to bed."

Again he heard it: "Go to bed!"

Suddenly sobered, he gazed straight at his wife. Had he been making a fool of himself? His shrewd brain, recovering itself, began to function. What had he said? No matter. He could explain it. He had always been able to explain everything to Jinnie.

"Gad! I believe I'm drunk! Forgive me, Jin! I ought to have had sense enough to have gone somewhere

and slept it off."

She did not help him with a word. She was wondering about the redhaired woman with a sharp nose. Such a description for a lover to offer!

He added, uneasy because of her look and continued silence:

"What's disturbing you, Jin?"

She made no reply, but sat looking at him as if he were a stranger. What was this man doing in her house?

He rose slowly to his feet, and stood, steadily enough, his blue eyes searching

"What have I said?"

Still no answer. He thought that she looked white and strange. She was cross about something. He could

"You are attaching importance to something I have said when . . . See here, Jinnie . . . We'll talk this over in the morning. I . . . I'll explain."

He yawned, and stretched his arms. "I'm ashamed of myself. That's a fact. After all these years . . . to make a goat of myself . . . I . . . I suppose I have . . . eh?" He added in a kindly way: "This sort of thing hasn't happened often . . . has it? Give me that much credit, Jin!"

Offended because she refused to reply, he became pettish, and added loftily as he strolled towards the door: "You are making a great mistake."

He said no more. But clinching his teeth upon his unlighted cigar, he left the room, taking elaborate care to close the door after him, forgetting that it was always left open. To perform this operation it was necessary to turn back the corner of a rug, and move a chair, both of which matters he accomplished with an ostentatious avoidance of the least noise.

The woman sitting by the burned-out

fire was very still also.

She recalled the good looks of the man, now on his way upstairs, at the time of their marriage. His cheerfulness, his sanity and health. He had made her think of Scotch heather with a morning breeze blowing over it. La-

ter, he had reminded her merely of Scotch whiskey.

Now his heart was as dry as dust, his affections withered, his appetites inflamed, his look a leer. And she had sworn to love him until death should them part.

That other woman had at least that very great advantage over her. She had sworn nothing of the sort.

As she considered the situation she suddenly became violently selfish, with the sort of selfishness which is displayed by a person who has been plunged into a vat of boiling water.

What did he matter?

But it was in vain that she asked it. Simon Craven, drunk, ugly hands, secret, and all, was the man she loved.



ME AND MYSELF

By Larry O'Rourke

OCCASIONALLY of a Sunday afternoon, I slip off to my own back-yard, bask in the sun, and get acquainted with myself.

Myself, I find to my ever-recurrent astonishment, is quite an interesting chap—a frank, modest, unassuming sort of a chap, far different from that Me that is bored by people, bores them in turn, accepts invitations to the houses of people he detests, and plays bridge. Myself—the Dr. Jekyll of Me—would like nothing better to do than to raise turnips in the back-yard, smoke his pipe in front of the kitchen stove, and eat Irish stew.

But alas for the happiness of Myself, my wife married Me!



THE nose is a fence. By dividing the face into halves it prevents one eye from seeing the lie in the other.



WHEN a man fails to discover new virtues in a woman, he has begun to discover her faults.



IT MUST BE FASCINATING TO KILL A WOMAN

By John Hamilton

I T must be fascinating to kill a woman A man seems to sense your intention, and uses vile epithets, and invariably springs at you, which makes the affair too personal for enjoyment. Sometimes his terrific struggles bend your knife.

With a child it is too simple. It rather imagines you are engaging in a new game and eyes your raised knife complacently . . . and altogether mo-

tionless. . . .

But a woman! Your knife flashes above her. She gazes raptly into your face and whispers: "My toreador!"

Your infernal vanity! You find yourself singing an aria from "Carmen" . . . and, later, your lips pressed against hers. . .

It must be fascinating to kill a woman.



THIS BANOUET

By John McClure

THERE are so many wines at this banquet, I am surprised they be not drunken,

even as I . . . So many strong wines:

The red wine of sunset . . . the white wine of dawn . . . the black draught of night . . . the purple wines of thunder and tempest . . . the golden wine of flowers and sunshine . . . the clear wine of sea-wind, of twilight . . .

There are so many strong wines at this banquet, I am surprised that they

be not all drunken, even as I.

But they go soberly and stolidly—like Presbyterians.



THE perfect marriage would be between a middle-aged woman and a very young man. The woman would have learned what not to expect, and the man would be quite ignorant of what he had missed.



IT is a mistake to assume a woman is wicked because she paints. Perhaps she merely wants to be wicked.

A NIGHT OF SIMPLE SONG

By Evelyn Campbell

HEN folks come to Kansas City, whether they hail from the East with a sample-case or herd in from Oklahoma way wearing a white Stetson, we always try to do our little best for them in the entertaining way. Oh, we know that the New Yorkers call us hayseeds, and that the cow countries are doing their worst to build up towns of their own in imitation of ours, but we're above anything like petty spite and don't hold it against them when we order drinks. We pride ourselves on our good old Missouri hospitality and hand out the glad smile and the willing hand just the same as if we didn't know they'd double cross us if they could.

We all know we've got something to be proud of, but we try to act sort of meek and unconscious of it—all the time with that warm glowing inside of us when we see their surprised looks at our new hotel which the President said was ——, and our pleasure steamboat, the City of Richmond, and the number of automobiles parked on the side streets. These, and some other institu-

The taxi drivers and the waiters, as well as the regular inhabitants, are all drilled and well trained in what they have to do. When all other amusements and sightseeing have palled on the jaded faculties of the guest or guests, the guide or guides always hums around a little and then says:

"How would you—er—are you game for something just a little—?"

And then while he, or they, restrain their natural eagerness with difficulty, they are led with carefully concealed trimuph to the Yellow Hen. It is in a basement, of course. You go down some steps, just as many as you would in New York or Chicago, and when you get to the last one a paroled convict grabs half your clothes. The Yellow, Hen one has a cauliflower ear, but nobody holds that against him. Then you descend two more steps and pass through some red plush curtains with the feeling that you are getting closer to something at every step.

The nest of the Yellow Hen is always rather crowded with the debris of such nests. There are the broken eggshells of men and women, whose brains are hollow, whose souls are empty and echoless, whose hearts are as cracked and crushed as bits of lime already changing back to dust and there are newly emerged chickens, too, downy fluffs, bright eyed and cunning, destined for early maturity; a short time beneath the wing of such an efficient mother can accomplish won-All this, with much smoke, voices in all keys and degrees, many tables and more than many chairs, hurrying black waiters, pausing long enough to slide caressing hands across the broad shoulders of the man from Laredo, who keeps his bills rolled loose in his pockets, or to hover with deprecating respect behind the chair of the blasé visitor who orders Budweiser bottled. But with all this conglomerate flotsam and jetsam the nest is yet not too crowded for the proper display of the Yellow Hen's proud achievement in maternity.

There is the usual shallow stage, backed by red curtains and a few dusty mock palms, a piano and a three-piece negro orchestra; and then there are the

girls, five of 'em!

No coryphees these! No ponies, broilers, or whatever you call 'em in your town. You buy your drinks to see a cabaret and we see to it that you see one, a real, downright, honest-to-goodness one, like old "Black Crook" days. Stall-fed, hominy and sweet-potato sort You know. Not one of them under a hundred and fifty or less than twenty-five years old. Honest value for your money; that's our slogan in the Middle West. For, while the Yellow Hen is an educator of sorts that no one may deny, she offers for your entertainment none but the finished product.

When the Five sang in chorus some rollicking, jolly air such as their patrons love, bringing down their rights in a hearty stamp, followed closely by their trusty lefts, it always seemed well that their sponsor builded upon a solid earth foundation, for theirs was no fairy They had frolic, upon my word! voices of tried timbre, strong, brassbound voices, warranted to reach to the fartherest recesses of their cave, and trained to reject such minor discomforts as smoke and noise. They were not afraid to sing out loud the words of raucous songs, whose meaning brought no blush to their cheeks or shrinking of their bold presence. They chose such ditties as were certain to appeal to the half-drowned faculties of their audience, and seasoned campaigners that they were, they made no mistake in selecting "hits," sure of their brazen ability to get across with what might have appalled demurer maidens.

At the time of the late misunderstanding with Mexico, before the smartest necktie clerk had laced his puttees, there were our girls, clad out and out in khaki, storming up and down, fixing prosperous customers on the point of cute little bayonets and yodeling some inspired doggerel composed by the haggard youth, whose job it was to drive the piano until four in the morning. All their songs were like that, full of pep, you know, so the fellows could pound on the table or keep time with their feet, not offending any-

body, you see?

It was the Five who made the Yellow Hen what it was, so naturally their fame went out ahead of them to places they had never even dreamed of in their gladsome existence. True, they had their geographical ideas like other people, naively connecting the cow countries with certain buying and selling seasons of the year, the oil fields with all the year around and the Eastern States with ennui. It was their simple litte way of getting at things, women's logic, but strangely accurate, seldom missing the bull's-eye. were simple-minded girls, desiring only to please. When a number which began as a solo and always ended in full chorus came to a close, you felt constrained to turn to your companion, disguising your pride as best you might and inquire with labored indifference:

"An' how did that strike you? Did you get that? Some institooshun, hey?"

And if he was from a stock country he always slapped himself somewhere to indicate enthusiasm and answered heartily:

"Some caf-fay!"

П

THERE was one night of the summer when every picture theater in the country was throwing American flags across the screen every ten minutes and keeping the piano player, whether human or mechanical, tuned up to "Dixie." On that night the Yellow Hen started out to have what looked like a redletter night. It was no particular occasion, no convention or anything like that. It was just one of those nights.

The place was crowded to the red plush curtains. The negro waiters brought in more and more chairs and tables, crowding them against each other until the knees of Kansas unconsciously bumped the indignant shins of Kentucky; beer splashed over the side of steins, highballs were very high indeed; sullen ones, in for long sittings,

drank straight Bourbon grumpily. At one or two tables altercations had already begun over the check, which resulted in its being paid twice over, in the good old-fashioned way, so delighting the attendants with promise of further pickings that they were all shining teeth and chuckle.

Everybody was smoking, everybody drinking, everybody happy in his or her own way; the Five happiest of all, naturally, for it was upon occasions such as this that talent rose from the mere slough of every-day singing and dancing. . . .

The fluffy one in pink, who painted dark-blue circles around her eyes, said to the old one, who, although she possessed a face mirrored with the vicissitudes of life, still got by upon the strength of a gift of repartee:

"Look's like a big night t'me. . . . Give 'em 'Carolina Lula-Hula,' hon! It's sure t' get th' money."

This was very generous, because "Carolina" was always sure of a handful of change and she might have sung it herself. However, the Five were not unduly selfish with each other, standing together in strength against many a common cause; and the old one, accepting the sacrifice in the spirit it was made, wriggled and gurgled, looking as Oriental as she could, and embarked upon her pilgrimage among the tables. She was but the caricature of woman, arrived at age without dignity, at experience without gentleness. She should have been putting grandchildren to bed, yet she was here with skimpy, hennaed hair drawn tightly away from her seared face, dressed in a soubrette's skirts, uttering with cruel leers words and sounds which should have blasted her mature lips. She made the tour of the room, lingered at a crowded table for a moment, then falteringly the song wavered and died.

A group of admirers in a distant corner demanded an encore with all the strength of honest, toil-hardened hands, but, strangely, she who ordinarily was not one to deny such insistence, returned to the platform with lagging

footsteps and signalled the pianist for a change. In the midst of the fluttering amazement of her fellows the pink girl exclaimed loudly:

"F'r Heavuns sake, Izabel! They're callin' yuh. G'on back!"

But Izabel merely shook her head dully.

"I ain't goin' to sing 'Carolina' no more tonight," she said.

She glanced at the manager, now rapidly approaching by means of a series of slides.

"I ain't goin' to sing that song, Claude," she greeted him defiantly, "I hope I got some decency left if I am workin' at the Hen."

But the manager himself, instead of anger, betrayed merely a sort of shamed bewilderment, completely out of keeping with his usual manner.

"I don' know but you're right, Izzy," he acknowledged, looking away over the crowded room. "I don' want to hurt nobody's feelin's that comes here by mistake. Maybe some of youse better sing 'River Shannon.' That's a good number, an'—an'—let th' girls go easy."

He left them standing open-mouthed; then with one accord they beset Isabel.

"I guess you better do as he says," she advised, "Go kinda easy. Mayme, you better sing 'Shannon.' It suits your voice. I know I can't do it. Soon as I got hep to that old white head I jus' froze up. I couldn't sing another note if they'd showered gold on me."

The big blonde fluffed her ruffled skirts and pulled down her shoulder straps.

"Aw, slush!" she jeered wearily. "Wat's eatin' yuh? Whose head?"

But by this another of the Five had taken the limelight and the dolorous measures of her husky contralto filled the room. She possessed what cigarettes and alcohol had left of a rather good voice and her audience changed under its influence from ribaldry to sentiment. The girls on the platform followed her with their eyes and noted with professional interest that her voyage was not without reward.

At the end of the room the singer stopped at a table where a man sat alone, and as she sung to him about the River Shannon there was a sort of tremble in her voice; she seemed to be asking him something. . . he sat there not noticing her, with his fingers just touching his glass of mineral water, his eyes straying around the room, surprised, eager to see everything, like a bright-eyed child. ently the girl turned away, just as the old one had done, and started back to the platform, and, though she, too, had plenty of applause, it was different from what had followed 'Carolina,' a respectable, regular applause which nobody could object to.

There was a change in the room. People were smoking and drinking, enjoying themselves, as they had an hour ago, but now there was a restraint mingled with their joymaking, a softening of the hard outline of revelry. Faces kept turning to look at the occupant of the small table by the red cur-

tain. He was a very old man with hair so white that it shone like a drift of snow against the dark background. He wore it rather long and tossed it back in a jaunty fashion, which proclaimed a remnant of youth, persisting against time. From his ruddy, withered face, above his drooping mustache, whiter even than his hair, his eyes, as blue as they had been at twenty-one, looked unclouded. He was dressed in an ancient but well-brushed and clean suit of army blue, his brass buttons gleamed brave and untarnished as his young eyes, and on his shrunken breast was pinned the emblem of his order. He was so decent and so old that it was no miracle for his presence to have despoiled the place of its evil spirit. A waiter put a glass at his elbow and his shrivelled old fingers toyed with it while he looked about him, not with disapproval or dismay, but rather as a newly awakened child stares at some amazing scene.

"Gosh!" murmured the big blonde in purple, with an explosive sigh, "Pipe the old party in the back row. Yankee Doodle's come to town, what? So that's what put the jinx on you girls!"

"See!" whispered the pink girl, pointing; "everybody's gettin' it. Look at them buyers from Kansas straighten their backs an' refusin' to buy drinks."

"What'd Claude let him in here for?" grumbled the pianist. "Just killed the evenin'. Rotten business!"

They turned upon him like a flock of annoyed bees, their usual wrangling forgotten in a concerted attack upon a common enemy.

"Ain't you got no manhood at all?" demanded Mayme with scorn. "Do you think anybody'd look that old guy in the face an' sing them songs? I thank Gawd I was raised different from—"

"Aw, slush," the pianist defended himself. "You show what kind of raisin' you had ever' time you open your mouth! I reckon I c'n respect old soldiers as well as enybody, but I like 'em in their place."

"Do you reckon he'd know about this place?" questioned Mayme fiercely. "Well, it's up to us to keep him from knowin'. It won't hurt the rest to listen to somethin' decent, I guess."

The youngest girl sentimentalized.

"He must be one of the real old soldiers. My, but they was brave an' noble. My gran'mother says—"

The evening waxed and waned. The music rose and fell, rose always in the mournful cadences of those old songs whose metre seemed measured in tears. fell in the sad choruses of fifty years ago, when all lovers sighed in vain. Charley, the pianist, who did not love sorrow, wished at least to be military, but this ambition was promptly vetoed. Caution yet remained with the entertainers of the Yellow Hen, and commonsense reminded them that patrons from Texas and Arkansas, however respectfully they might regard age and the insignia of their land, would not too long endure a concert of "Marching Through Georgia" and the like. So they compromised on "Annie Laurie" and "Silver Threads Among the Gold," steering delicately clear of the shoals that lay in the innocent suggestion of

"My Old Kentucky Home" and "Old

Black Joe."

So determined to be neutral were they that the old one, who by right of seniority selected the program, acquired a racking headache in its inception. But it was she who had discovered the ancient veteran and in a measure was pledged to his diversion. Not that it could be properly so called, for to the end he seemed scarcely conscious of their efforts to please, but continued to sit in his place, a remote reminder of what men had been in other days, gazing about the room with bright, blue, interested eyes.

About eleven o'clock, when the dancing should have been in full swing but had not even begun, the manager again made his way to the minute waiting-

room behind the back drop.

"You girls cert'nly dropped the wet blanket over this gatherin," he complained bitterly. "Here I drop a hint about the soft pedal, not meaning to turn this int' a wake, an' youse done nothin' but bawl about graveyards an' pond lilies. . . I'm for treatin' th' old guy with all doo respect, but I guess he drifted in here the same as anybody else, lookin' for amoosement, so let's have somethin' lively. "Tipperary' 'll do."

But the old one only sniffed, echoed

by the others.

"You men! Not one of you brave enough to get out an' fight. That pore old man's worth six of you right now. He makes me think of my

daddy-"

"Aw, Lord," the plump one wriggled in her corsage, "Huh! What if th' hicks from th' South do get sore? We'll sing 'Tentin' T'night' just once an' get th' old felleh feelin' good before

he goes."

But it transpired that no one knew the words of that dear old favorite, the memory of the oldest not dating beyond "Sweet Marie," so that a fair compromise was at last effected when the Five, with their jaunty if solid quickstep toned to a sonorous march, gave "The Grand Old Flag" with all the strength and feeling called forth by the occasion.

"For," said the pink one, who was a natural born club president," if the old gink pays us the respect of comin' into this joint when all the swell places is open to him, the least we can do is to

show him respect, too."

"The Grand Old Flag" was a success, both from an artistic and financial standpoint; largess was showered on the Five, accompanied by cheerful if subdued applause, and with the undiminished zeal which is born of success the large blonde, a sentimentalist, prepared for a touching performance of "Ben Bolt." But her purpose was thwarted by the stir of departure made by the object of all these polite attentions—a departure followed by the sympathetic and kindly glances of the majority of the patrons; a leisurely departure.

III

FIRST the old soldier took a sip of his mineral water, then steadying himself with one—hand on the table, he rose slowly and deliberately to his feet, reaching for his cane and large, respectable hat upon a nearby rack. When he had retrieved these articles he assumed the hat and made his way through a respectfully opened lane to the entrance of the place.

At the cigar counter a stringy Texan was looped languidly over the case, engaged in a desultory conversation with the presiding lady. At the moment of the veteran's arrival she was called away and the two men fell into one of those easy conversations born and nour-

ished by tobacco.

The old man did most of the talking. He had a sharp, eagle-like profile, though sunken and diminished, and when he talked rapidly as he did to this chance acquaintance, there was something fierce and indubitably alive in his face which kept pace with his bright blue interested eyes. It was the younger man who became dull, surprised, uncommunicative.

Presently the cigar girl returned, the two made their purchases and turned away, the veteran hobbling up the marble steps rather painfully, and the Texan, staring fixedly after the retreating figure, joined Claude at the coat rack.

"Them old guys is just as full of fight as ever," said the manager admiringly: "I bet he's just bustin' to go to

war."

The Texan still looked-dazed.

"Lan' o' cotton!" he murmured beneath his breath; "Lan' o' cotton! Full

o' fight? I should say so."

"I wonder who steered him in here," ruminated Claude, playing with his checks absentmindedly. "We treated him right, though; you gotta give it to us. I reckon I got as much love for my country as anybody, if I didn't go to th' border. An' th' girls spread themselves. They sung th' best songs they knew after they seen him here, th' pore old cuss! I'm glad he's gone, though. Wonder what he thought of us."

The Texan turned his chewing tobacco languorously in his lean cheek and relaxed against a pillar.

"He says t' me," he drawled, "he says

to me, he's heard of th' Yellow Hen over in Kansas where he lives, an' he always laid off to see f'r himself. You all was just plum mistaken about that old codger. He didn't come over here to hear Civel War songs. No sirree! He was tellin' me this away. He's got two sons runnin' a restauraw in Augusty, that new oil town, an' since th' strike the business has grown till they want to put in all the new improvements. It was th' old man who stood out for th' cabber-ay. He'd heard all about th' Yellow Hen girls, an' he was up and r'arin' to have a place just like it in Augusty. I think he come over with some notion of hirin' some of your girls, but he says t' me: Shucks, they're th' poorest bunch he ever lissened to. They didn't know a song later'n what folks sung when he was a boy. He says t' me his boys'll be disappointed if he comes back without any entertainers, so he's goin' to keep on around town till he finds somethin' that'll do. They lef' it all in his hands. They got full dependence in him, he says. That old codger tells me he's th' bes' judge of wimmin west side of th' Missouri line, an' I reckon I got no cause to doubt him."



THINGS SEEN IN AN ALLEY

By James Shannon

A MAN practising angling, casting a fly into a tomatic can; the skeleton of a corset; French lingerie flirting over a back fence with a red flannel undershirt; a young boy skinning a dead cat; a row of empty beer bottles on a window-sill; family histories hanging on the line; a grocery boy fighting with a second maid; a baby licking mud off of an old bicycle tire; a ragpicker digging disconsolately in a garbage pail; a scented letter, written on mauve paper, thrown into a mud-puddle; the ray of a dying sun glinting beautifully on a ketchup bottle.



A WOMAN would rather stay at home with a stupid man than be in heaven with a clever woman.

THE BLACKED SEPULCHRE

By Hugh Kahler

1

ROM his very teething-ring days, Lawrence Markle shrank from the unknown. He did not struggle to surmount the circumvallations of his crib; he avoided gustatory experiments with the painted populations of his Noah's arks, with aunt-bestowed pennies. Later he kept sagaciously to the safety of the garden and the shaggy lawn, lusting thirstily the while for intrepid explorations along and beyond the yellow-dusted highway which skirted his father's scroll-saw palace on the town's hillward edge. Still later, at the Union School, he found it impossible to manifest a decent defiance of petticoated tyranny; he flung no wellchewed paper, bent no pins, read not a single work of fiction under cover of

geography.

The honor in men's eyes to be had of these exploits lured persistently, but triumphant terrors held him fast in leash. Released, at four o'clock, upon a world of fearful fascinations, he lingered, a dry-haired craven, on the bank while his mates invited disaster in the swimming-hole. He stole no farmer's tender apple. Twin dreads of nausea and the parental rod restrained him when Caporals were smoked behind the barn. The endless wars of youth found him a canny camp-follower, skulking behind the victor's lines, accepting inevitable pummelings, a pacifist rather than risk the sorer perils of resistance. A ball thrown toward him stung his palms while still in flight; he closed his eyes and cowered amid jeers. Thus it fell to him to fetch water for the others, to notch their tallies, to retrieve foultips from the potato-field behind the backstop. He envied the players, not their pleasure in the sport, but the honors earned therefrom. Slowly his character became an endless tug-of-war between a passion for acclaim and a terror of adventure, a balanced duel which resulted in inglorious inertia.

Girls, impinging on his mysteriously widened horizon at fifteen or so. brought fresh longings and new fears. He glowered enviously at cheerful cavaliers, but shrank back from the ordeal of conversation, the crude badinage of observers. Driven by major forces to a party, he hung craven on the battle's fringe, tortured by a sullen inner conflict of desire and caution. He could not learn to dance; the mere proximity of his partners paralyzed his feet. Gradually, an avid listener to the furtive, unregenerate boastings of elders, his imagination was inflamed with new possibilities, his terrors pointed afresh.

He slipped into a habit of reserve, of silence. Emerging from the Union School with only half-disgraceful academic honors, he yearned secretly for the laurels of the blacksmith's son, a brawny pitcher, already dight in leather apron at his father's anvil. His own waiting groove seemed doubly inglorious—the ledgers at his father's prospering dry-goods store on Brownsville's main street promised no brighter future

than the past.

Indeed, as the years dragged, his insignificance intensified by contrast with his father's prominence. Brownsville was growing like an ugly weed. Unlovely lumps of brick reared belching stacks beside the creek; their emanations killed the willows and the old

swimming-hole reeked pestilently of their waste. Thick-fallen soot greyed and blackened the jig-saw arabesques of the houses. A trolley-line crawled across the farming-lands from Syrchester. Movie-palaces sprang up, throve and multiplied. There were more saloons even a few crimson fanlights above once-honored doors. It was progress, prosperity, as American communities conceive and boast of it. And the elder Markle stood at the forefront of it all, a deep-voiced booster, intent upon the town's new growth, its sootstained riches.

The business drifted more and more to Lawrence's control, and faithfully he dealt with it, timidity serving him well, an invaluable counter-check against his father's careless optimism. They prospered, and Lawrence knew that it was thanks to him. But he came to hate even his prosperity, for it earned him no share of the applause his being craved. To the public eye his father personified the business; each cubit added to its stature but accentuated the contrast between the big, breezy man and his drab, unconsidered son. men who fawned on the elder Markle's wealth and prestige, patronized the son. Lawrence hated them, hated Brownsville, hated his father, and most of all, himself.

II.

It was in a dull fever of this resentment that he made his first discovery of the possibilities of false appearance.

Passing Jim Doherty's cigar-store, after a late evening over trial balances, the lights of the modernized shop, the burst of laughter which drifted out through its screened doorway, halted him. For one fleeting instant desire overcame timidity; he found himself at the counter before reflection stayed his step. He knew Doherty and the three customers who lounged against his showcases, as he knew almost everyone of Brownsville's native stock. He thought he detected a smirk of ridicule

in their greetings. His pride stiffened his neck. He'd show them.

"Well, Larry," said Doherty genially, "what'll it be to-night? Don't get much of your trade, do I?"

Milt Freeman, who despised Larry's taste in the collars and shirts he infrequently sold him, snickered scornfully.

"You'd get fat on him, Jim," he sneered. "Larry'd die if he hit a pipe."
The worm turned. Larry regarded

Milt steadily for ten seconds, hating him. Then he said quietly:

"I don't advertise my habits." He turned to Doherty. "Give me a hun-

dred of the best cigarettes."

Here, too, the fates played on his side. It so fell out that a clever advertising man had lately hit upon the notion of appealing for patronage by asserting, broadcast: "You don't need to mention the name—just ask for the best cigarette and you'll get it." Doherty grinned approvingly.

"I get you, Larry, old scout." He winked and reached behind him. "Right

up to the minute, eh?"

Larry paid for the cigarettes with a new twenty-dollar note. Even Milt Freeman was subdued by the spectacle. With a sense of victory throbbing through him, Larry squared his shoulders and strode out. He put the tin box away on his closet shelf, unopened. Two dollars and fifty cents was a trifling price for such a taste of triumph.

He had no idea of carrying the thing farther, then, but a night or two later, passing the store, he yielded to a sudden temptation and sauntered in.

"Need another hundred of the best ones, Jim," he said carelessly. Doherty pursed merry lips in a silent whistle.

"Already? Gee, you eat 'em, don't you? I didn't even know you smoked." "Don't—on the street," said Larry.

"Don't—on the street," said Larry.
"That's small-town stuff—like eating
peanuts. Been getting mine from the
city, but might as well patronize a live
one like you, for a change."

"That's right—I carry as good a line as the best of 'em. Much obliged."

Doherty was an easy convert. "Rice," says the Chinese philosopher, "is the

best argument." A customer who bought five dollars' worth of cigarettes in a week was sure of a respectful welcome at Doherty's. The loungers who smoked Morganas at twenty-for-ten felt the subtle difference in his tone. They greeted Larry with something like deference thenceforward. He stored the second box away with the first. The third he took to the office, for the regalement of visiting salesmen. A display of silver in Eistein's window caught his eye about this time, and he equipped himself with a thin, flat case, holding twenty cigarettes. He carried seven in it.

When, a fortnight or so after this purchase he overheard a reference to himself as a cigarette-fiend, his cup brimmed and ran over. The report reached his father's ear, and that conservative adherent of strong, black domestic cigars, expostulated. Larry loftily explained the difference between a bad cigar and a good cigarette, and left the field with the honors of war, a new respect in his sire's glance warming him.

III.

Our of his habit of dropping in at Doherty's he encountered, for the first time, the nocturnal diversions of the rustic profligate. There was speech of girls, reference to past triumphs and future promises. Sam Welsby, who wore the progressive raiment heavily advertised in popular weeklies, led, it appeared, an existence conspicuously blameful. In this respect even Milt Freeman deferred to him. Sam. he confessed mournfully, could give him cards and spades and little casino and beat him hands down at the skirt stuff, a remark which caused Mr. Welsby to brush the ash from his Morgana with modest deprecation and turned the enviously respectful glances of Lonny Baird and Joe Dimmick upon the hero of romantic endeavor. He pulled down his waistcoat and settled his collar as a pair of cheaply glittering girls dawdled past the door. It was plain that he even

now meditated a descent upon the dovecote. He glanced at Larry, deep calling to deep across the shallows.

"Come along, Larry?" Larry felt the tensity of the moment. His reputation stood at stake. A refusal in the face of such an opportunity would blast his new-earned honors hopelessly. And yet—the mere thought of the ordeal involved in assent shook him to the soul. He was inspired suddenly.

"Mill-hands," he said condescendingly. "You're welcome to 'em both, Sam. I guess I'm hard to suit, but the gum-squad makes no hit with me."
"Aw—"

Sam's pleasure in the prospect, his pride of invincibility, winked out like a puffed candle-flame. He glanced about for support, but his disciples had forsaken him.

"Sam's a sparrow-hawk, all right," said the fickle Freeman. "He's the fair-haired little boy with the kitchen mechanics. Good luck, Sam."

"Aw—" repeated the fallen idol. In his bliss Larry knew a noble magnanimity. There, but for the grace of God, stood Lawrence Markle!

"What do you expect in a ten-cent town?" he defended. "If I didn't get down to New York once a month or so—" his unfinished sentence permitted his impressed auditors to infer that under stress of circumstance even a nice discrimination might be debased. Sam brightened gratefully.

"That's what I say, Larry. What else is there here?" He turned on his late allies savagely. "At that, you're false alarms. You don't even get across with this cheap poultry. You make me tired."

He followed Larry out of the store. They walked a few blocks together, Sam enlivening the journey by highly unfavorable comparisons between the place of his nativity and the subtler immoralities of Manhattan. Larry agreed with him. He knew that he had set his feet firmly upon the second round of his ladder. Henceforth among Brownsville's cognoscenti he would enjoy repute as one whose daring wickedness

was equalled only by the nicety of his tastes.

Alone in his room he meditated upon the miraculous cheapness of human honors. For a few dollars he had acquired the name of one steeped in a perpetual debauch of nicotine, without even the pang of a single experiment with the fact. At the cost of an empty phrase he stepped into full possession of a Byronic fame, deferred to as a superior by even Sam Welsby! It was easy enough, once one grasped the simple secret. There was no need for outfacing those persistent terrors. out venturing upon the untried perils of the game a cunning man could enjoy all the benefit and usufruct of the name. He glimpsed a future gladdened by the counsels of the ungodly, without the dangers and terrors of an actual stand in the way of sinners, at the cost only of an innocuous and easy occupation of the seat of the scornful. Life flowered radiantly before him.

His eyes clear-sighted now, he left nothing more to the whim of kindly chance. He assisted destiny cunningly, with the craft which invariably accompanies timidity. When business took him again to New York—he enjoyed buying as much as he would have feared the rebuffs of selling-he walked along Broadway at the dinner-hour, almost nerved to the pitch of entering one of the formidable restaurants where hat-girls and head waiters lay in wait for their quarry, but the uselessness of braving such terrors where none would see and admire restrained him. The game itself, as always, had no charm for him; it was the price one paid, unless one had the wit to cheat cleverly, for the all-desirable name.

The exotic women he saw crossing the walks to waiting motors did not in the least attract him, yet a mental picture of himself flaunting such a trophy under the awed eyes of Brownsville was enough to send a quiver of sheer ecstasy along his sprine. In that mood, had Brownsville been there to see, he might have dared anything, even to answering the swift, speculative glances which studied him as he walked past unattended women. As it was, his mind concerned itself only with the problem of edifying Brownsville with a convincing surface of sophisticated sin.

He hit upon it, at last. It cost him a hideous struggle with his shyness to brave the eyes of a salesgirl at one of the big stores, but he managed it. And, returning to Brownsville that evening, he dropped in at Doherty's on his way home to taste the joys of unmerited suspicion and admit by feeble denials accusations wholly without foundation in fact. Envy waited him,

"Just a business trip," he protested, with a faint smile which gave him the lie. "No white lights—on the level."

"Oh, no!" Milt Freeman's tone bathed him in the irony of its grateful disbelief. "Nothing like that, of course. You don't need to tell us, Larry. We know you!"

"Straight goods, Milt." He turned to the counter. "Another hundred, Jim.

I'm getting low."

The banter proceeded as the tin was wrapped and tied. It was pure balm for Larry's spirit. His hand trembled as he thrust it into his trouser-pocket for the roll of bills he carried there. He drew it forth clumsily, tense with delightful anticipations. Something fell softly to the floor at Lonny Baird's feet. There was a whoop of glee as Lonny retrieved and displayed to the appreciative spectators a single damning stocking, silken, crumpled, utterly unanswerable.

Larry's back was pounded. A chorus of hilarious condemnation laughed away his final, stuttered protests. The verdict of guilty had been passed upon him, by a jury of his peers. He sank to the delicious ignominy of begging their silence. It would never do, he explained, to have a story like this get around—bad for business, you see. He knew that their tongues would clack greedily as they passed the word. He was a made man.

He went off, clutching his cigarettes, a riot of rejoicing seething in his IV.

EVIDENCES of his new repute were swift and manifold. His father heard a magnified rumor at the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce, and referred to the matter with something like diffidence, evidently impressed with this unsuspected phase of his son's character. He ventured upon mild warnings; a man had to be careful of his reputation, just like a woman—especially a business man; he hoped Lawrence would use discretion in default of virtue, as due their common business interests.

Never before had he treated his son as so nearly an equal, and the altered tone and manner utterly captivated the impenitent. The fruits of deception savored beyond his anticipations. He felt his wild oats. A new confidence appeared in his face and his bearing. He nodded to the town's substantial citizens with a touch of condescension, instead of meekly making way for them as they passed. Without consulting his father, he drew on his comfortable savings-account and bought a modest runabout, which he drove with an air of languid detachment which more than atoned for the invariable respect he paid

the speed regulations.

Brownsville was still in its small-town swaddling-bands. Rumor yet skipped easily by the wireless of all newspaperless communities, though Brownsville now boasted a daily four-page journal of its own. Sam Welsby hinted darkly in the hearing of his sister. Subsequently, encountering Larry Markle as she promenaded Elm Street with Milly Baird, the two compared notes. inspected Larry with an interest wholly new in their experience. Milly, of an investigative bent, went so far as to ask him to call. Her brother's marked and provincial disapproval of this, heightened Larry's new fascination. His own embarrassed refusal she construed as springing from either a lingering tenderness of conscience or a sophisticated distaste for the companionship of virtue. Larry, agonized by a dawning vogue among Brownsville's virgins, understood and exulted even as he fled and lied. He explained his attitude to Sam and Lonny, laboriously.

"Way I look at it is a fellow ought to be one thing or the other," he declared. "I don't belong in the Sunday School crowd, and I'm not going to pretend that I do. You can take your choice—nice girls and a church wedding, or your freedom and—the other kind. It's a rotten trick to play it both

ways.'

Sam and Lonny approved, reported. Larry's reputation as a profligate profited by this nice distinction. A number of impressed young women, recognizing in this proof of delicacy an evidence that there was a lot of good in Larry, sacrificed themselves in the praiseworthy endeavor to salvage the remnant of virtue. Parental disapproval naturally enhanced Larry's charm in their estimate, and the elusiveness of Larry himself did not in the least diminish it. He was excruciatingly happy in the knowledge that his townsfolk regarded him as a desperately clever rake; that younger fry looked up to him as a model of discreet indiscretion; that the simpler Lotharios of Doherty's store envied and respected him as their master.

A kind of contempt for gullible humanity came to serve him in lieu of the courage which had been prenatally omitted from his composition. He could not be afraid of those he despised as his gulls. A decision crept into his tone. He began to be spoken of as one of Brownsville's rising generation of business men. Meanwhile the array of cigarette-tins on his shelf expanded steadily, a reminder of the essential hollowness of his glory, a literal skeleton in his closet. He kept the door locked.

He had driven his little car to Doherty's late one September evening, after witnessing, in outward boredom—as became a blasé rounder—and an inward gratification which overlooked a number of glaring defects, the performance of a last season's play, now

being rendered by a number four company to such three-night stands as Brownsville. In the cast one well-favored damsel had impacted most agreeably on his vision, inspiring the pleasing fantasy of his habit. He loved to dally with the idea of affronting Brownsville with the visible evidence of his evil prowess. When he beheld a lady such as this his mind instantly painted for him a delightfully alluring picture of himself squiring the fair along Main Street, debonair, at his ease, a master of guile and bravado. How Sam Welsby would stare! How Lonny Baird's chin would drop!

He hugged the idea as he contemplated the goodly surface of Miss Myldryd Caryll, as the program identified the lady for him. He was still more or less under the spell of his imaginings as he emerged from Doherty's with his usual tin of "the best ones." He had crossed jauntily to his car and was busy with its switches when his eyes stared full into those of Miss Myldryd in the very flesh. Not being on in the last act, she had completed her toilet in time to mingle with the homing spectators. It was Saturday. At twelvetwo the local would bear her on toward the Junction, where, at three-eighteen, the Utica Express would grudgingly stop for the troop. Miss Caryll, a person of acute perceptions, realized the redeeming features of this situation. Wherefore, as she walked along Main Street toward the Onondaga House, her pace was deliberate, her manner receptive, her eye alert and unforbidding.

She surveyed Larry with a glint of pleasure in her glance. He was pleasingly unlike the two village cut-ups who were at this moment following her a step or two in the rear and whom she had mentally photographed in a single casual glance at the last corner. Impulse beckoned, but Miss Caryll combined the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence of the dove. She was a good girl: by which she meant that she accepted entertainment from casual acquaintances only when she was quite

certain that it would be possible to depart abruptly when the check had been paid. The john in the Kute Kollege Klothes—no less a personage than the redoubtable Mr. Welsby himself—could be dismissed in that fashion, she knew of long experience with the type. Of this quietly dressed, competent-looking person she was not quite so sure. She hesitated, tempted—and in that instant's vacillation was lost.

For Larry was still under the influence of his dreams. A fictitious courage nerved him. The sight of Sam Welsby slinking along behind the very girl who had been playing a central role in his secret drama spurred him to dizzy heights of daring. He grinned

amiably.

"Rather—rather ride?" he heard himself saying. The girl smiled.

himself saying. The girl smiled. "Do you call it riding—in a Flivver?" she parried. "Oh, I'll try it—once."

She scrambled nimbly to the seat. Terror struck him by the throat now that the die was cast. Why had he done it? What was the sense of monkeying with the real thing when the appearance got just as good results? Now he'd have to talk to her, go through with it—somehow. Darn it! Another glimpse of Welsby's ludicrous countenance restored his zest. At least the effort was not to be wasted.

"Hotel?" He gulped down his

quavers.

"Checked out—before the show," she told him. "Isn't there some place to eat? I'm a long, long way from breakfast."

"There's—there's the City Line," he suggested, naming Brownsville's newest claim to metropolitan joys, a tawdry roadhouse, refurnished and modernized.

"All right." It appeared to be settled. He turned the car, a little dizzily, narrowly missing the Baird equipage. The new arc-lights were pitiless. From the tail of an eye he was made aware that Milly Baird had recognized him—and his comrade. To-morrow the town would know of this bare-faced escapade. The thought warmed him.

He exceeded his normal speed on the way to the City Line. The lady was comfortingly silent. He did not have to talk. At the roadhouse she ordered discreetly: a club sandwich, claret lemonade; a sweet afterward. He duplicated this. She talked now, between bites, leaving him free to listen. She led, it developed, a canine existence long jumps — day-coaches — third-rate hotels. It was, she averred, enough to account for more irregularity of behavior than is commonly attributed to strolling players. He agreed, knowingly. "That's so-but most of the talk about the stage is-just talk."

"You're pretty wise, aren't you?"
She surveyed him with respect. "You don't act as if you hung out in a hick

town. Live here?"

"I get away a good bit," he explained.

"New York, mostly."

"I thought so. I was kinda shy about you. I can handle these village alecks easy enough, but a real sport is some-

thing else again, Mawruss."

He grinned his acknowledgments. Secretly he began to entertain new fears, disquieting doubts. He was uncomfortably aware of his duties, under the code. The affair, nevertheless, had gone far enough. He wished himself well out of it. Only a reluctance to default in his obligations restrained him from suggesting departure. He proposed, instead, another drink. She considered this deliberately, acquiesced. It was all right, being good, but there was something to be said on the other side, after all. She drifted. The novelty of being treated with grave courtesy charmed her unconsciously. She softened toward this quiet fellow who conducted himself as toward a woman he respected, admired honorably; who did not ogle her with hateful eyes, whisper flat, coarsely evil jokes, smirk significantly. If he wanted her .

He glanced at his watch, whistled.

"Twelve-thirty!"

"Then the local's gone!" Miss Caryll knew her moment of dismay at the crossing of her Rubicon. "I was due to leave—"

"Never mind. To-morrow's Sunday—you can stay over and catch up with the company in plenty of time." He was kindly reassuring. Her lip quivered.

"I know—but—but—oh, you've got me all wrong. I—I'm not that kind—I'm just a grafter—that's all. I take what's coming to me in free eats and duck. . . . I knew I ought not to take a chance on you—you're wise—

you're-"

He was stupefied. Praise from Sir Hubert indeed! He had scarcely hoped to deceive such accomplished eyes as these. She had feared him! She fancied him as perilously adept, in a class apart from the impressionable youths who could be induced to buy refreshment and deftly dismissed thereafter! She was afraid of him—actually afraid of Larry Markle, terror's prey from birth!

"I—I—" he stumbled as his idea came to him. "I'm not robbing cradles, Miss Caryll. I'm not that sort. I'm no saint, but there are limits. Look here, I'll take you over to the Junction in the Flivver. You can catch the Express there with the rest of them. There!"

She eyed him almost reverently. "Honest? Say, you're a prince! I—I tell you, it takes a sport to show a white streak where it counts! Come on!"

He drove her through the still, keen night, his pulses throbbing. Her approval thrilled him through. The name, without the game! It was soft-too soft. You could get away with a bluff even with the wisest, if you minded your eye! And-his hands trembled on the wheel at the realization-back in Brownsville tongues were already wagging-about him! To-morrow he would wake to find himself infamous! He pressed his tin of cigarettes on her as a parting gift when he left her on the platform at the Junction, relieved at finding a use for the white elephants at last. It was almost dawn when he put the car away in the stable behind the sleeping house.

V.

SAM WELSBY talked to excellent effect: Miss Baird, gleaning additional data from her brother, talked to even more definite results. Brownsville drew the line somewhere. It wasn't narrow, it hoped; but there are some things which cannot be overlooked, even in the most tolerant of circles. Immorality may be winked at, ignored, if kept discreetly in the background; flaunted in the face of society it becomes insolence, to be punished. Larry's fate was sealed by noon of Sunday. Henceforth he was a pariah, outcast, to be shunned as a pestilence by self-respecting maidens. Milly Baird, encountering him on her way home from church, established a

precedent by cutting him dead. He understood. He did not require the awed explanations of Lonny to enlighten him, nor the chastened admonitions of his father. He realized, with a joyous relief, that hereafter he would be spared the necessity of comporting himself toward these ladies in a fashion commensurate with his supposititious depravity. There would be no more of those trying moments when he faced an admiring virgin with his tongue paralyzed, his mind vacant. They would pass him by on the other side. The reflection stimulated him so that, when visited by the Baptist minister, bent on plucking this well-charred brand from the burning, he contrived an indifference so cynical that the good man abandoned the enterprise as hopeless and joined himself forthwith to the chorus of Larry's disapprovers.

Life, therefore, assumed a rosier tint. In his pariahdom Larry was intensely happy. Each covert glance which bore witness to his reputation gratefully ministered to his self-approval. He gained in confidence steadily. The business flourished; he was made an equal partner, and deserved it. His father openly leaned on his judgments, deferred to his opinions. He found his place in the town's commercial life. Socially, he became an institution. Brownsville was secretly

proud of him, pointed him out, whispered of his prowess with something of the same human instinct which impels the small boy to cherish a fervent respect for the James brothers.

All of which Larry knew. He was so absorbed in his enjoyment of this atmosphere that he all but forgot the hollowness of his pretensions. He came, at last, to think of himself as the town thought of him; to take his reputation seriously. And then, with a flash of illumination almost blinding in its sudden clarity, he saw the truth. Which calls for elucidation.

It was at the Country Club—Browns-ville had one, now, with a nine-hole golf course and a brace of tennis-courts. The former game attracted Larry from his first acquaintance with its peculiar virtues. The ball was reassuringly static, to begin with. It could not conceivably menace the player. The element of conflict, with its possible humiliations, was not essential. One could play solo. An annoying gallery was improbable, easily avoided at the worst. Decidedly, then, a game to cultivate.

He came to play rather decently. Saturday afternoons and Sundays usually found him on the links, weather permitting. He avoided the group on the verandah when he came in, however. He still basked in his outcast condition; but one never could tell. At any instant the ban might be raised.

Thus, during the first fortnight of her visit to Milly Baird, Beth Tennant was permitted to inspect him from a distance on several occasions, without being exposed to the infections of his acquaintance. Surrounded by young men who failed to stir the slightest enthusiasm in her sophisticated spirit, Larry's person and demeanor attracted her. She demanded the reason for his leper-like exclusion, to be eagerly enlightened by Milly, rather pleased to be able to exhibit this admirable specimen of the genus rake, as one points out the Opera House and the Jail and the Lover's Leap to visiting outlanders. Miss Tennant's attitude was disappointing.

"And you sent him to Coventry for that?" she criticized. "Dear me! How deliciously archaic! I had no idea you were so splendidly mid-Victorian up here. He's rather good-looking, your reprobate. I think I'll cultivate him."

Milly was impressed. "Really? When you know what he is? I—I've thought of that, sometimes. It must be more exciting to know that a man has—has lived." She reddened modestly.

"My dear child," condescended sophistication, "they've all—'lived,' as you delicately put it. Some of them admit it. The rest lie about it. Me, I prefer the downright sinner to the whited sepulchre. I'm going to have a look at your Horrible Example."

Wherefore it came about that the following afternoon Lawrence Markle narrowly escaped annihilation by a whistling slice which sang over his shoulder and thudded into the rough beyond. It was natural for him to wheel, thus attacked, and so confront a flushed and apologetic girl, playing alone. It was inevitable that he should listen to her excuses and proceed to cooperate in a search for the lost ball. It was a logical consequence that they should finish the round and begin another, together, to the scandalization of close observers on the club verandah. It was less logical, perhaps, but not in the least unnatural that Larry, tasting for the first time in his life the savor of feminine society with which his mind held no association of restraint and timidity, treated for the first time in months as a person worthy of toleration, complimented, with substantial justice, on three or four workmanlike approaches and a long, lucky putt, should experience that phenomenon of the emotions commonly known as love at first sight.

The eminent Mr. Fitzsimmons has remarked shrewdly that "the bigger they are the 'arder they fall." When a shy man falls in love he is apt to do so with a perceptible thud. Larry fell very hard. Not without excellent provocation, for Beth Tennant had her full share of agreeable comeliness, and her

taste in dress did it excellent justice. Against a background of girls for whom he entertained a certain scorn as easy victims of his pretensions, whom he remembered as pig-tailed and pinafored tomboys, the innocent sources of early embarrassment, she profited beyond her just deserts. Larry drove her back to the Baird house in a condition of semi-coma; he was divinely drunk. The state manufactures its own courage. Evening found him a dauntless suppliant at the Baird doorbell. Miss Tennant's insistence earned him a pretense of welcome. She herself was by no means immune to the subtle influence of palpable adoration. And there is in the admiration of Experience an insidious compliment wholly wanting in the most fervent devotion of Innocence. The success of known and branded profligates in the siege of good women is by no means difficult of explanation. The best of women are susceptible to attack which chooses vanity as its gateway. Beth Tennant's pride was touched by her instant conquest of this famous connoisseur. found her in a yielding mood. The atmosphere of the house was not comfortable for either. Both were conscious of disapproval. The tiny little motor solved the difficulty. They departed amid a perceptible frost.

VI.

LARRY'S design was exceeding simple. Above Brownsville, reached by a steep, mile-long ascent, was a sheer bluff, from the top of which one commanded a wide vista of the valley, with the town huddled at one end. It was a favorite spot for picnics during daylight hours, an admirable objective for lovers' journeys after dark. When a Brownsville youth contracted the infection of love in its matrimonial form, his first thought was inevitably of Table Mountain. The backs of the rustic benches, the trunks of nearby trees, are an admirable chronological record of Brownsville's romances, carven in hieroglyph of linked hearts and intertwined initials by the jackknives of five generations. It is an inevitable setting for the love scene, like the vaudeville theater's economical device which stages all manner of drama in the selfsame set. Larry meant to follow precedent. Here, in the spot hallowed by a hundred plighted troths, he would

plight his own.

They said little during the drive. Larry's thoughts were too turgid for orderly utterance, while the wheel demanded some share of his attention. The girl, too, was evidently in no humor for idle chatter. They emerged on the little plateau, faintly perfumed with a reminiscence of bygone bananas, littered with ghostly ruins of shoe-boxes which had held lunches long devoured. He took her elbow as they walked across the uneven turf to the brink. She shot a quick glance at him as his fingers touched her sleeve. It was a lonely spot, after all, and sophistication is not necessarily an adequate defense. Intuition warned her that the moment was pregnant, the atmosphere electric, while Milly Baird's description of Markle's character suggested the specific nature of the peril. She was distinctly uneasy. But, as he found her a place on a bench overlooking the lights of the town, nestled in its cup at the feet of the hills, reassurance came to her. He was a profligate, no doubt, but he was obviously a gentleman, able to distinguish between the two kinds of women which are divided by the gulf impassable. It would be all right. The silence oppressed her, however.

"Don't you want to smoke?" she suggested. It was a well-tried gambit.

"Thanks—I never smoke before girls," he told her. "I'm old-fashioned about it."

"I rather like that." She was quite sincere in her approval. "I wonder why it is that—that fast men always have nice manners."

Fast men! The fruits of his careless plantings were as the bitterness of wormwood on Larry's lips. Blind fool, he had labored zealously to surround himself with ill-repute as with a gar-

ment, heedless of the day when those cunning fabrications should reproach him in the eyes of the One who Mattered! He had dared to hope, from the fact that she displayed no sign of timid aversion, that she did not know his fictitious history, that in her sight he was as other men. But she knew! Of course they would have told hertrust that spiteful Milly Baird to spread the scandal! And then, suddenly, a vast thankfulness pervaded him, as he realized that it was scandal, utterly false report; that below his tarnished repute he was pure, blameless, immaculate as the virgin lily, as the new-fallen drift of snow. He shuddered as he saw how narrowly he had escaped the perils that beset the feet of youth; how easily he might have stumbled into the net of the fowler; how slight was the margin by which he had avoided disaster. And his heart swelled joyously with the grateful knowledge that he had been spared, even in his blindness, from the reality of evil. He could come, now, to this glorious, clean-souled girl, without one fleck of reproach upon his past. As pure as she herself, he need not blush above ugly episodes buried in a lying heart. He saw, suddenly, that it was his skill at masquerade which had kept him unspoiled in a world of lures and temptations; that, satisfied with the empty sham of evil, he had escaped the actuality which must otherwise have stained his record, shamed him now before this radiant angel's virginal gaze. Integer vitae, scelerisque purus!

"Beth," his voice was tremulous, pleading. He turned toward her, suppliant, eager. "Beth, I—I love you!"

She was delightfully thrilled. So, not even her patent respectability restrained him! He was even worse than she had fancied, fascinatingly unregenerate, daring even to assault her entrenched and armored virtue!

"Don't, Larry," she said softly. "I—I'm not the kind of woman you're used to. You—you've misunderstood, I guess, because I—I didn't treat you as the others here do. You mustn't think—"

He brushed the interruption aside impetuously. "I love you, Beth—I want you to marry me. I—I've waited all my life"—he was four and twenty—"to find the One Woman. And it's you—you—"

"Marry you?" She was genuinely startled. "You want me to marry

you!"

"Please! I love you so, Beth! I—" "Wait. I must think." She silenced him brusquely. This was a contingency quite outside her calculations. She had been so convinced of his unregeneracy that not even her accurate appraisal of her attractions had encouraged a belief that he would forsake his false gods for her sake-certainly not on so slight acquaintance. The tribute touched her deeply. Here was this man, disillusioned, sophisticated, callous to emotion, ready to fling himself at her feet like a romantic boy, eager to forswear his habits, to abandon his ill manner of life, for her sake. The persistent conviction shared by every daughter of Eve that she is destined to reform male character through marriage, the mysterious glamor with which the eyes of virtue endow the face of vice, the night, the solitude, the vibrant pleading in the man's voice, all tempted her. She saw him dimly in the feeble starlight, a man of alluringly mystic sin-a dark, conquering, irresistible male before whose address the defenses of so many hapless sisters had fallen. The aura of forbidden things surrounded him. made her decision swiftly. She would marry him. But the moment was too precious to be shortened. She must prolong it to the uttermost, extract every thrill it held, before she robbed it of its element of suspense.

"Would you really give up—give up your—your habits—for me?" She asked the question seriously, as though there were more than one answer. He stared, at a loss, for the instant, to understand, so strong upon him was his grateful glow of conscious virtue. She elaborated, with grave sweetness.

"I—I can forgive—all that has been. A woman learns not to hope that she

may be first in a man's life as he is first in hers. It is one of life's bitter lessons—for us, but we learn it. What is past is past. But the future—could you change? Could you be sure that in a little, when the first flush of romance has paled—" she rather fancied this phrase, esteeming herself its creator, in spite of much fervid reading -"you would not hear the old life calling you back to it? Can you trust yourself to face that, Larry? You see it's rather a sober responsibility you're assuming. I—I'm afraid to count on you. A man who has lived as you have lived-"

"Beth, wait! Don't go on! I can settle that for you, once for all." He was half-mad with triumph. "You needn't ever be afraid of that again—it's an empty fear. I haven't lived—at all! You are first! There has never been another woman in my life! Only you, dearest—only you—"

"Oh, Larry!" She was sweetly incredulous, reproachful. "Don't think you need lie to me about the dead-and-buried past. I'm no child. I don't have to be coddled with fairy falsehoods. It's the future that touches me—the past doesn't matter if I can only

be sure of—"

"That's it! You're judging the future by a past that never existed." He interrupted eagerly. "You wouldn't think of doubting me if you hadn't heard all those lies about me. And they are lies, every one of them, Beth. There's not a shadow of truth in all the scandal they talk about me. You've got to believe that—you must believe that—that—"

"Larry—Larry! You won't give me credit for any breadth—any strength—"

"I do—I do—but there's no need of it. I—I've been a fool, Beth. I—I wanted to have people think I was no end of a fellow. I wanted them to envy me—I faked it all. I've been an idiot, but nothing worse. Listen—"

He plunged headlong into his story, lashing himself with his new-born contempt. He spared her nothing, not even the shameful incident of the cigarettes. At last he paused. "Do you believe me, Beth?"

"I—I don't know." Her tone was curiously different. "I'm afraid—"

"But I can prove one part of it," he cried. "If I've been pretending all this time about the smoking, that would go to support the rest of it, wouldn't it? Well, if you'll stop at our house on the way back I'll show almost a hundred tins of these things, with the seals unbroken. My closet's half-full of them! Isn't that enough?"

There was a long, long silence. The girl studied him steadily in the faint light. She saw, suddenly, a rather narrow-shouldered fellow, with a slight stoop and a flat chest. His chin was weak, and his eyes too far apart. His hair grew too low on his forehead, and his lashes, even in the semi-darkness, were innocuously pallid. She passed a hand across her brow, as one who wakes from a vivid dream.

"Quite enough, I think," she said coolly. "It's rather late. Let's be going back."

"But—but you haven't answered me, Beth. Don't torture me with sus-

"I shan't. I'm sorry, but I couldn't possibly marry you, Larry."

"You don't believe me? You still think—"

She rose, smoothing her skirt over her hips.

"Oh, no," she said carelessly. "I believe you." She yawned behind a palm. "That's why," she concluded cryptically.

VII.

LARRY MARKLE is still engaged in a praiseworthy but utterly hopeless endeaver to live down his horrific past. Nobody in Brownsville respects him, not even the members of his class in the Baptist Sabbath School. One of his heaviest crosses is the fact that behind the locked door of his closet are ninetytwo tins, each containing one hundred of the best cigarettes. He has as yet failed to conceive of any method of disposing of them, and the thought that, in the event of his sudden demise, their discovery would be inevitable and damning is a frequent and effective disturber of his nightly repose. Verily, the way of the transgressor is hard, even though his transgressions be coun-The world condemns the whited sepulchre—it only laughs at the blacked one.



POR QUE?

By Elsbeth Murphy Nelson

SAFETY first. Watch your step. Warnings to young women traveling alone. Doctors. Burglar alarms. Pad-locks. R. R. crossing signals. Don't alight until the car stops. In the theatre pick out the exit nearest your seat. Swat the fly. Typhoid vaccine. Don't drink this water without boiling. Gas masks. No smoking allowed in this garage. Insurance companies. Skid chains. Do not spit on the sidewalk. Don't blow out the gas. Rubber heels. Life preservers. Fire drills. Every woman should carry an automatic. Ministers. Sanitary towels and drinking cups—

IN GOD WE TRUST!



LE DIABLE S'AMUSE

By R. J. Templeton

THE Great Man sat at his desk in his luxuriously furnished office. In his hand he held the annual statement of his Profit and Loss Account. It showed that during the year he had made more money than most well-to-do people earn in a lifetime. Yet, somehow, he was dissatisfied.

And he was tired. He seemed to be

always tired nowadays.

Leaning back wearily in his chair, he closed his eyes. Naturally enough, his thoughts flew off to the time when weariness was known only pleasurably. He thought of those days in the old home where he had been one of a large family of healthy youngsters. How he had enjoyed those hard-up times! What pleasure he had got out of the stray quarters that now and then, at rare intervals, came his way! How he had treasured them for the new fishing pole, the skates, the bob-sleigh!

What equivalent pleasure could he now buy with all his millions? What pleasure of any kind did he get out of them? What time had he for pleasure, indeed? Time! He was a slave to his business. For years he had lived in one city, with occasional trips to other cities. He was bound to his city and to his interests as a slave is bound to his master. What had his business allowed him to know of other things; even of the country that claimed him as one of its most influential citizens?

He laughed sardonically as he recalled the numerous occasions upon which his advice had been sought and taken in connection with state legislation. What did he know about the state? Nothing, except in so far as the state might be utilized for conmercial aggrandizement. What did he know of anything, in fact, except his

wretched business

Rousing himself, he threw the neatly tyepwritten page from him and rose from his chair. Walking to the window, he looked out upon the human stream that flowed beneath. He noted particularly outstanding individuals: a soldier with his family, probably at home for a brief leave before proceeding to the Mexican border; a clergyman; an Englishman; an Italian labourer with his pick over his shoulder and his shovel suspended from it; some sailors from a merchantman in port, seeing the sights during their shore leave; a teamster coaxing his sturdy horses up the grade; the traffic policeman watching it all with practiced eye.

There was a knock upon his door, and his chauffeur entered: a young man of thirty or thereabouts, lithe of body, clear-eyed, a personification of The Great Man noted healthiness. these human characteristics in his serv-

ant for the first time.

"Your car is at the door, sir," said the man.

"Thank you, Burke," said his employer."Come back in half an hour. I'm not quite ready yet."
"All right, sir," answered the man,

and left.

Returning to his chair, The Great Man thought of the man who had just left—his servant. He remembered his application for the post of chauffeur a He recalled, somewhat year ago. vaguely, his statement of his past experience in Australia, South Africa, England, and, lately, in different parts of Canada and the United States. What

an interesting life the man must have had! What he must know of the

world and its ways!

He took up again the paper he had been examining, and noted his wealth. There was enough to keep him in luxury for the rest of his life, and then leave a very respectable fortune over for the benefit of his descendants. If he increased it how much better off would he be—or they? Why not stop now? He had had his fill of business experience. Why not, before he grew too old, journey into some of the bypaths of life of which he now knew so little?

He struck his desk a heavy blow. He would do it! He would spend the rest of his life living! He would quietly release himself from his commercial interests, unwind the binding thongs that held him to one place, and then slip out into the great restless human sea, to renew his youth, to feel again the good blood flow under excitement, the nerves true. Why had he not thought of doing this before?

His face lit up. He stood erect, in-

toxicated with the prospect.

The door opened abruptly and The

Partner entered.

"Glad I caught you," he said. "I overtook Burke on his way in and took the liberty of telling him not to inter-

rupt you for a while yet. Have you seen Lawson?"

"No," replied The Great Man.

"Why?"

"Then you haven't heard the news!" cried The Partner excitedly. "Say, we have them! Lawson got his people to-They counted their gether today. They've enough to carry it. votes. They are calling a general meeting for next week to consider our proposition. The old originals won't be able to hold them. They'll put up a fight, of course, but Lawson assures me he's got the That money of ours did majority. good work! Say, in a few years we'll be the wealthiest men in the United States! No opposition! A clear monopoly! Think of it!"

"Last time I saw Lawson he didn't think it could be done," said The Great

Man, tensely.

"He didn't, then," returned The Partner, "but he got Torrance at the last minute, and you know how much of the stock he holds. Say, it's wonderful, simply wonderful!"

There was silence in the room for a

minute or two.

Then The Great Man reached across his desk and grasped The Partner's hand.

"It's wonderful!" he said. Then they got down to plans.



CREATION

By Alice King

God was by man created:
Man told his mate, elated:
Lo, I have brought forth a God!

Woman, fair as the morning, Laughed her man's God to scorning, Saying:—

You may have made one Divinity; I have created a Trinity!
—She kissed her tiny son.

THE BOW'S RUN UPLIFT

By L. M. Hussey

THE hamlet of Bow's Run is so peculiarly inaccessible that the children of the place regard the sight of a visitor as a rare omen equivalent to four-leaf clover finding.

Yet since the automobile became common and developed to the point where a negotiation of the formidable roads giving ingress to Bow's Run was possible, there was, even so recently as a bare year past, a favored coterie of motoring pilgrims who knew this place and came to it at intervals as a pleasing diversion. The secret of Bow's Run's attractiveness to these begoggled esoterics lay solely in the Bow's Run Tavern and the genius of Harry Lingfelter, its proprietor.

This Lingfelter was the example of an individual born with the elusive gift of being host. Had his nature been cold, commercial and unsentimental, he would have gone from Bow's Run to some metropolis where he could have become master of a great establishment and acquired a not insignificant fame.

But unsentimentality was particularly the quality which Lingfelter did not hold in his character. He was born in Bow's Run and had a sentimental love for the place. His veritable genius as a master of amusement and entertainment was lavished upon the inhabitants of his native village with an affectionate fervor. Nothing so strongly stirred the heart of Lingfelter as to draw the whole town into revel at his establishment and observe everybody laughing, and the spirits of all running high.

On the most auspicious evenings he would tour his place like a hen taking

count of her chicks; first he would stroll through his dance hall and watch the farm hands and the girls doing the modern dances of the day before yesterday, or perhaps, if he had imported for the evening a wandering ventriloquist or a shoddy magician, would pause and take in part of the turn. And he would never forget to appear presently in the bar and perhaps call for a round on the house and lean over the counter to exchange a shady quip or two with one of the several local wits.

- And scarcely any resident of Bow's Run neglected at the least an occasional visit to the Tavern. Lingfelter injected into the atmosphere breathed there so certain and yet intangible a quality of charm that its attractiveness was irresistible Exactly this was the lodestone which drew in over the barriers of Bow's Run roads those few motoring visitors who knew the place. gasoline-perfumed pilgrims from the outer world and the heavy motor truck of the Lingfelter establishment made almost the complete count of vehicular traffic for any distance over the local highways. This Lingfelter truck was, of course, an apparently permanent and perpetual institution and every few days it could be seen pulling into Bow's Run from the incredibly distant railroad down in the valley, loaded with genial barrels, quarter barrels and suggestive boxes.

Of course, it cannot with any great truth be claimed that the Bow's Run of the past—that is, the Bow's Run extant for years until the termination of the epoch a scant twelvementh ago—was in general a place liable long to

quench thirst with fortitude and self-denial.

The town had rather more tangible

and material notions.

In consequence, the fact cannot fairly be hidden that a certain insignificant fraction of one per centum of the Bow's Run populace was more or less permanently inebriate. For the most part this was a circumstance of great beneficence, for nearly the total personnel of these Bow's Run rummies was made up of naturally hard characters, who in an abstemious community would have devoted their energies to theft, rape, murder and other villainies.

But under the Lingfelter regime these natural blackguards were perpetually incapacitated for their infamous predilections and the wooden jail at Bow's Run in those days remained

empty.

It is apparent that in all ways the genius of this tavern host Lingfelter conferred benefit upon the hamlet of Bow's Run. Should you in that day have queried anyone for the name of the most prominent and respected citizen, Lingfelter would have risen to the

tongue of the native.

And had the questionings been carried on just prior to the advent of the local Uplift, it would have been interesting in view of the singular events following upon that time to have pressed the inquiries further to the point of asking the next several names held most in esteem at Bow's Run. Beyoud doubt there would have been offered as the second most important personage, Myrat Comfort, Bow's Run's landed proprietor and gentleman of importance in his early forties. And the third name would curiously have been a woman's. Not a native, she was a Bow's Run public officer and having only a few months before come out of universities situated in the remote world, had in so short a time made her personality felt and her work on new and foreign topics noteworthy in the local school.

Yet not an inhabitant of the period would have visioned even remotely a

connection, save as members of the same community, between the fortunes of Lingfelter and Myrat Comfort and the erudite school mistress, nor caught even in moments of fantastic nightmare the link which connected the Bow's Run Tavern with Myrat Comfort and his freshly conceived attraction for the governess of the public education. . . .

II.

Myrat Comfort, chastely attired in a decent black cutaway coat, generously tailored trousers, and a pair of admirable patent leather shoes of a mode well known in the Bow's Run bootery, but a trifle exotic to the observer from the outer world, sat on a cushioned sofa in Miss Lucy Harmond's salon—known there as the parlor—awaiting her descent of the stairs and appearance through the portières at the door.

Myrat was a little uneasy and troubled with a shade of nervousness. He was not quite sure but that his age would be against him and that Lucy would prefer to regard him more as a paternal friend than in the light of

lover.

Although not really five and forty, he feared that his appearance at times would mislead the observer to a greater estimate than his years merited. But since it was a night most pertinent to his fortunes, he had done what art could to render his countenance and mien more seemingly youthful. With Pomade Hongroise, after first cutting it into shape, he had waxed to points the ends of his moustache after a manner he had seen in some of the young bloods of the metropolis. With the same material he had changed the direction of his hair and given it more a mode of youth.

Afterward, in his mirror, the reflection which met him aroused for the moment a great optimism in his heart. This bouyant feeling had held a place in his consciousness until he was well within the portals of Miss Harmond's dwelling, when its volatile quality became evident and evaporation set in.

He had not been seated waiting upon the sofa for five minutes before all his hopeful *verve* had vamoosed and a growing nervous depression announced itself.

Initially Myrat was afflicted with a haunting concern about the staying qualities of his Pomade—would it not render his visage ridiculous if the wax should fail in its binding power and let the points separate into a spray of odiously ludicrous splinters? Once the efficacy of the stuff came under question, its dubiousness could not, of course, be confined to one place of employment and ignored in another and consequently Myrat felt chilling qualms about the condition of his hair and came finally to softly blaspheme under breath at his folly in adopting this exotic agent of the foreign fop.

So Lucy stood in the doorway a few moments before Myrat, obsessed with his perturbations, observed her.

A first glimpse of her gave a notion of great youth and not at all the impression that she was a tremendously important character in the Bow's Run community.

But even in the short period she stood quietly in front of the hangings, this first evanescent idea of her immaturity departed and an ever so slight contraction of the brows and a pushing forward of the nether maxillaries bespoke something of the intensity and determination which among her acquaintances were recognized as patent in her character.

"What on earth are you thinking

about?" she asked.

Myrat Comfort turned to her with a start and colored a trifle in a momentary confusion.

"I . . ." he began hesitatingly.

"You looked like you were miles away and not seeing anything particularly pleasant either."

Myrat arose and took her hand

She seated herself on the sofa and he occupied again his old position, being now only a few inches from her.

He took a rather quick, frightened

survey of her and, although the man of largest affairs in Bow's Run, his courage for the immediate enterprise ebbed for the time to a point of practical nullity.

There was no impression of immature innocence made upon Myrat. He felt her strength and the domination of her character and particularly a tremendous and insurmountable aloofness which he felt surely must be an essential part of her.

"Still you haven't given me any explanation of your preoccupation," he

heard her saying.

"I... I was preoccupied..."

"Not an observation of very great criginality. What I want to know is why."

"There was a matter of enormous

importance in my mind."

"What! Were you bringing your business worries here? Really I can't allow that. You must put those things into their proper hours."

"You're entirely mistaken. It was nothing to do with my business. Something much more to me than business.

Something. . . . "

"Tell me; just what are you driving

at? I can't imagine."

"Lucy," he said, grasping her hand, "I am in love with you. I want you to be my wife. . . . "

She regarded him silently a moment. "I thought you were going to say that," she said.

"I love you," he repeated. "Won't

you be my wife?"

She knitted her brows somewhat intensely and tapped slowly with the toe of her slipper upon the japalac-ed floor. Myrat secured her other hand and held now both of them tightly.

Lucy withdrew her hands.

"I don't know," she said slowly, and added after a slight pause: "There would always be conditions. . . ."

"Tell me. Tell me what I must do,"

began Myrat. "I'll do anything."

"The man I marry," stated Lucy, with deliberation, "must be a certain kind of man. I'm not at all sure that you are that kind of man. The man I

marry will have to be something more than just a brute with only . . . only desire. He would have to want me enough to make sacrifices for me and to show that he was also willing enough to do the work which I know is my work.

"... Tell me...."

She ignored the interruption and continued.

"I am filled with a love of humanity and . . . the man I marry must be filled with the love of humanity, too. He must not be just an animal interested in brute things. He must think of the fine things and the race "

"What is it you want done? Tell

me. Try . . .

"He would have to with me try to make life like a bright sword-thrust; begin with little things perhaps and help upward and onward..."

"Will you marry me?" asked Myrat. "I will be everything you wish. Every-

thing of mine. . . .'

"If I should say yes to you," said Lucy, "would you be willing to begin right in our own little town? Would you promise to help me try to bring

the light into Bow's Run?"

The question appeared singular and a trifle irrelevant to Myrat. What had this wonderful and sublime business of uplifting to do with Bow's Run? No one ever before conceived such a notion for the inhabitants of that community. But in his fervor he waived all minutiæ.

"Anything you ask," he said.

He attempted to put his arms about

"Wait a moment," she said quickly and eluding him. "I've been terribly general. You must understand what I mean. You must give me a chance to be specific."

"Just tell me," said Myrat, ardently.
"I'm afraid you don't realize," she said, "the baseness of this little village. You've been here all your life and are calloused. But I'm a newcomer and my eyes can see. The place is lying in the dirt; it is forgetting all the fine

inspiring things of life—and only through one cause."

Myrat was genuinely bewildered.

He dropped her hands for a few seconds in his surprise and regarded her with a countenance expressing considerable interrogation.

"The Tavern!" she said. "That creature Lingfelter! He is making brutes and beasts out of the souls of

our people. . . ."

"Harry? Harry Lingfelter!"

"The Tavern must go!" she continued. "It is the first fine thing we must do."

"But you can't, you know!" exclaimed Myrat, thoroughly amazed. "That's impossible. The people would never hear of it. You could never get signatures enough for the court to revoke his licence. Why Lingfelter . . ."

"That is it exactly," she said. "It is the thing we must do. The people must be aroused. They must be given the light. I've thought about it ever since I came here and I know exactly what to do. We must get Jimmy Farley here to hold a revival. That will be your contribution to the cause. . . "

"But"

"Farley, the evangelist. He can make them see the light. That man Lingfelter must leave."

Myrat Comfort's ardour swept upon him in a great wave. He forgot the friendship of a lifetime and played Judas in an instant.

"We shall get Farley," he said. "I will guarantee all his expenses. We will make it a fine clean uplifted town. Will you marry me, Lucy?"

"Yes," she murmured.

Myrat took her into his arms and brought his lips against hers for some moments. As he drew them away, she turned her head and he observed her looking into a little wall mirror and arranging her disordered hair. Myrat looked also into the mirror and noticed with the perfection of sang-froid that his moustache points had splintered into many droll divisions on the ends.

"'Sweetness and Light,' " she turned

to him and murmured. . . .

THE advent of Jimmy Farley and his revival tent in the town of Bow's Run was received by the natives initially as an almost jocose affair. They knew, moreover, that Myrat Comfort was back of it financially, otherwise this point would have been shrouded in great mystery, for it was quite apparent that the contributions which might be hopefully expected from a place the size of Bow's Run could never meet the demands of an evangelistic divine so renowned as Jimmy Farley.

Mystery enough, however, remained in the mere fact of his coming.

No one could understand it.

What did Bow's Run need with Jimmy Farley? They possessed a church and a duly installed pastor and everybody, save a few who might have been indisposed through a slight biliousness, and the cobbler, who was an anarchist and Free-Thinker, went every Sunday and heard all about spiritual matters.

But they observed the indisputable fact that the great evangelist had come as the white sails of his revival canvas rose up into the clear Bow's Run at-

mosphere.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that the folks of Bow's Run were indifferent to the initial meeting held under the tent. This would be to assume a singular lack of natural curiosity on the part of the inhabitants whereas they were quite normally endowed with this quality. But had it not been for the particular excellencies in the delivery of the Rev. Farley, the supposition that after the first few meetings attendance would drop to nothing, would have been justified.

The Rev. Jimmy Farley, however, had been trained in the best school of the futurist theologic manner. He was double-jointed, ambidextrous, and acquainted with the arts of legerdemain. One of his favorite methods of impressing a spiritual verity into the core of his hearers' souls was to leap over three chairs and a table, turning a double flip in the air during his passage.

Always he used a trapeze bar freely during his sermons and it is said that some of his exhibitions of juggling would have rendered erythematous the cheek of a professional.

It was a singularly uplifting sight to observe the truths of the spirit dropping from his lips and the inhabitants of Bow's Run went again and again and each time they left the tent, after caroling the beautiful revival hymns, an increased fervor of enthusiasm could be

detected in their deportment.

On the Monday beginning his second week, Jimmy Farley had a sawdust trail, after the manner of his great protagonist, laid down and before the close of the week the evangelist had drawn everybody in the village up the trail save an insignificant few. He felt indeed that the time was now ripe for his real work, the mission which had brought him to Bow's Run.

So Farley sent out his lieutenants and on one pretext or another drew from the precincts of the Tavern those habitual alcoholics who spent their time there instead of in arson and house-breaking. Comforting them with not inferior whiskey, which he always carried with him for medicinal purposes, he concealed them back of the platform and as he looked out in the evening over the tent filled with the natives of Bow's Run, he began his celebrated exhortation on the Demon Rum.

Those who never heard this man delivering the sermon held among all his others to be supreme, cannot conceive his power to move and to evoke tears and action.

He used first medical charts, prepared particularly, and he showed with these graphic representations the degenerating effects of the alcoholic poison.

But as he moved on to the spiritual sides of the problem, he achieved his greatest responses and at last he marched out upon the platform the comfortably drunk coterie of Bow's Run rummies.

"There are mothers here!" shouted Farley. "Mothers, how would you like

to have these for your sons? Fathers, how would you like to call these your children. . . ."

A callithumpian roar went up from

the emotionally aroused faces.

Farley saw his moment and seized an ax he had provided for the con-

tingency.

"I'm going down to the Bow's Run Tavern," he yelled. "I'm going to give these men a chance to be clean men. Who'll follow me and break every bottle and every barrel in that hole of the devil? . . ."

And the populace of Bow's Run arose en masse and tore through the ex-

its of the tent.

That night Lingfelter just escaped death at the hands of the mob. His place was demolished, a petition was signed and sent to the court and a month later the licence of the Bow's Run Tavern was revoked.

Lingfelter left Bow's Run and went

to New York.

IV

Bow's Run had had an uplifted and tavernless town for two months before it was generally realized that the community had fallen upon evil days.

In the first place as soon as the delirium tremens and general alcoholic impregnation wore off the two rummies, these fellows took to deviltries of various sorts and an appropriation had to be made for a new jail. Taxes went up and the office of Justice of the Peace become lucrative for the first time—a desiderate post—and so political corruption crept into Bow's Run.

But more than any of these minor ills the Bow's Run community missed and mourned at last the Tavern and the person of Harry Lingfelter. The ethical culture society which Lucy Comfort started as a substitute for Tavern dances and the Tavern bar and Tavern entertainments was a flat failure. Even the desperate project of importing Hyslop and a few table-rappers from New York produced only a half-hearted en-

thusiasm. The populace of Bow's Run

simply proved unable to sustain continuously a lively and absorbing interest in their souls. The meetings of the society were, in fact, indefinitely postponed when at the last one (where there was prospected a discussion on the uplifting influence on American life produced by the works of Eleanor H. Porter) excluding the officials there appeared only an audience of one, he an individual totally deaf and notoriously a miser whose only interest in the meetings was that he could appear in the heated hall and keep warm for several hours without burning any coal.

At last a committee of prominent and elderly citizens met and after a long discussion unanimously resolved that the township of Bow's Run was going inordinately to seed and could only be saved by procuring again in their midst the person of Lingfelter. Therefore a letter was started to New York and eventually received by the former proprietor of the Bow's Run Tavern.

However, it was not the Lingfelter of old who read the appeal to return to Bow's Run. His experience had put him through a searing fire and not having a philosophy to stand up against them, had changed his soul. In the months since his exodus he had brooded upon his destiny and a bitter hatred of men had come over him. He felt that he must even his score with the world and devise some means of making men taste the wormwood which had been pushed against his own lips.

Lingfelter, metempsychosed, did not have his moment of diabolic inspiration until the letter from Bow's Run arrived. But this gave to him his Mephistophelean chance! He saw in a lurid brimstone moment the opportunity to bring rue into peaceful communities, to make pharisees out of reasonably honest men and parch the throats of a happy nation. So he set down with the smile of an evil imp and wrote of his determination to the committee at Bow's Run.

"Gentlemen," he inscribed. "I regret that I cannot return among you. I am

growing old and a new work calls me to which I must give my life and remaining days. I have seen the light and must go to the uplift of a suffering people. Even will I bear the curse of

inevitable riches in the following of my devout belief. I shall talk to men and sinners and in all places. From now on the world shall know me as Harry Lingfelter, the itinerant evangelist. . . ."



ON MY DEATHBED I AM WORRIED

By June Gibson

On my deathbed I am worried.

I am dying.
There is an unnatural rattle in my throat and strange shapes float before me.
Jerry will come to my funeral.
He will be drunk.
Jerry is invariably drunk.
He will say something tactless.
Jerry invariably says something tactless.

He will probably say to my husband: "She has that same droop to her lower lip as when she is sleeping."

On my deathbed I am worried.



ROUGE

By Hortense Flexner

I BOUGHT a box of rouge last week,
"One must be young," I said,
"And wear a hint of blossoms, too,
Flush of swift blood the Spring beats through,"
And this I thought my rouge would do,
A flat, round cake of red.

But now I've hidden it away,
For this is what I know:
There is no shop where one can buy
On wintry days a glad June sky;
No shop that sells a box of dye
To make hearts glow.

THE END OF PIERROT

By John McClure

T HE scene is a tavern with tables and chairs. The air is somewhat obscured by smoke. There are no persons present. Pierrot enters, walks to a table and falls into a chair.

PIERROT

It is the last night. I am done with it all. And I would give all the pompoms of my coat only to know what is the meaning of this riddle. I cannot understand. My heart is heavy which should be laughing as it has laughed forever. . . . All the way here to-night her face danced before me like a firefly. And I thought I should never remember her again Her face came dancing out of the dark like a firefly. . . . It is strange. . . . I would give all the pompoms of my coat, and all the laughs I ever laughed, and all the dances I ever danced only to know the meaning of this riddle.

(As he is speaking a maiden has entered. She wears a star in her hair.)

MAIDEN

You do not know, Pierrot. You can never know, Pierrot.

PIERROT

Who are you?

MAIDEN

I shall not tell. Perhaps I am the spirit of all the women that ever were. I shall not tell. But you shall never know, Pierrot.

PIERROT

I cannot understand. The face of the woman I love came out of the dark to-night, dancing before me like a firefly. I thought I had forgotten her. I wept three nights in the shadow of a poplar-tree, and four nights in clear moonlight. Then I thought I had forgotten her. But to-night all along the lonely road her face haunted me like a firefly. We danced together in a minuet by moonlight long ago. Her face was like a moon-flower. Her eyes were like jewels of dark fire. I shall love her forever. But she is forgetful of me since long ago.

MAIDEN

So you go grieving forever. You are only a man with the heart of a child, Pierrot.

PIERROT

I cannot understand.

MAIDEN

You can never understand, Pierrot—Pierrot.

PIERROT

Columbine would have loved me, had I but wished it. She is dead. But I dreamed of the lady with a face like a moon-flower and laughed at her. Columbine would have loved me. She is dead. And the lady with eyes of dark fire has gone on another road.

MAIDEN

So you go grieving forever, Pierrot
—Pierrot.

PIERROT

Columbine is dead. She would have loved me. She is dead since long ago. At midnight she comes calling and

calling: "Open the door, for the love of God!" And I am afraid. She calls pitifully, so pitifully: "For the Love of God!"

MAIDEN

And the lady with a face like a moon-flower, Pierrot?

PIERROT

She has gone away on another road. I cannot understand. I wept for seven days, but she did not come back. We danced together in a minuet by moonlight long ago. Her face was like a rose in moonshine. Now I go dreaming forever. I cannot understand.

MAIDEN

Love is the riddle of a thousand lives, Pierrot. Not till the stars fall out of the heavens like silver and golden hail shall it be answered. Columbine is dead and the lady with eyes of dark fire shall never know you again. You are only a man with the heart of a child, Pierrot. 'You can never understand. You can never understand.

(The Maiden retires. Enter a Winebottle as large as a man.)

PIERROT

What can it mean—this dreaming and grieving forever?

THE BOTTLE

You do not know, Pierrot. You can never know, Pierrot.

PIERROT

Who are you?

THE BOTTLE
I am monarch of this world.

PIERROT

You can tell me all things. You can riddle me this riddle. Why did I toss away love when I had it, all for desire of a moon-maiden, and now go grieving forever?

THE BOTTLE

You can never know, Pierrot. I can tell you nothing. For you are only a man with the heart of a child and can

never understand. But joy and forgetfulness, great possessions, merriment all day long, these I can give you. I can make you a king.

PIERROT

I—a lean man with the heart of a child, grieving forever? I—with my pompoms?

THE BOTTLE

You with your pompoms. I can make you king o' Rome. Drink. (Pierrot drinks.)

PIERROT

I am king o' Rome.

THE BOTTLE You are merry as a pie.

PIERROT

I am merry as a pie.

THE BOTTLE

Ha! Ha!

PIERROT

Ha! Ha!

THE BOTTLE

You are the king o' Rome, as merry as a pie. Who was that lean man in pompoms, grieving forever?

PIERROT

He was an ass. They call him Pierrot. He was only an ass with the heart of a child, a lean ass in pompoms, grieving forever.

THE BOTTLE

You are a very merry, mad and merry king o' Rome.

PIERROT

I am sleepy.

(Pierrot sleeps, As he sleeps, Columbine approaches, a dainty, slender, wide-eyed, wistful girl.)

COLUMBINE

I loved you, Pierrot. I loved you for your heart of a child, that all the world laughed at. I have loved you since long ago. Open your eyes. It is I, Pierrot

—I, Columbine. Open your eyes. Open your eyes for the love of God!

(Pierrol sleeps. Columbine retires, weeping, As she vanishes a woman with eyes of dark fire flits across the stage jouching Pierrot on the shoulder. He awakes.)

PIERROT

What was that?—Pardon me. Your king o' Rome has become an head-ache. You have told me nothing. As I slept i heard her calling: "For the love of God!" As I slept, I dreamed that the woman win dark eyes came past me, tapping me upon the shoulder. What can it mean?

THE BOTTLE

Ask me no riddles, for I solve none. Forgetfulness, joy of the hour, these I can give, no more. For five minutes you were king o' Rome. Is not that something, say?

PIERROT

Nothing, to one who is dreaming forever.

(The Bottle retires. Enter a Grey Man.)

PIERROT

For five minutes I was king o' Rome. But it did not ease me. What can it mean?

THE GREY MAN

You do not know, Pierrot. You can never know, Pierrot.

PIERROT

Who are you?

THE GREY MAN

I shall not tell. I am one who is silvered with winters. Perhaps I am the spirit of all the men that ever were. You can never know, Pierrot.

PIERROT

Riddle me this riddle, silver sir. Why did I toss away love like an apple, and but for desire of a moon-maiden with

no profit of it at all, save that I go grieving forever?

THE GREY MAN

I cannot tell, Pierrot. We can never understand, you and I. I have seen all, I am silvered with winters. But I cannot understand. I can never understand. Much less you, who are only a man with the heart of a child. You can never know, Pierrot.

(The Grey Man retires. Enter a Figure in a Black Cowl.)

PIERROT

Who are you?

THE COWL

I am the Silencer.

PIERROT

Riddle me this riddle. Why must I go dreaming and grieving forever? I cannot understand. We danced together in a minuet by moonlight long ago. She has forgotten me now. Yet all night her face dances before me like a firefly and all night I hear Columbine—she is dead—calling and calling "For the love of God!" I cannot understand.

THE COWL

You can never understand, Pierrot. I can tell you nothing. No one ever understands. Perhaps the woman with dark eyes herself is sad for love of someone who has forgotten her since long ago, sad and grieving forever. Perhaps. Who knows? But I can tell you nothing. I am the Silencer, and I bring you that which is better than knowledge, Pierrot, and which is more golden than gold—

PIERROT

And what is that?

THE COWL

Sleep.

(The Figure in the Black Cowl touches Pierrot gently on the forehead and he drops his head on his arms as if in sleep.)

THE MISSING GUEST

A PLAY IN ONE ACT AND NO DIALOGUE

By Roland K. Young

CHARACTERS

WILLIAM HARTOP
EVANGELINE HARTOP (his wife)
MARIGOLD HARTOP (their daughter)
CHRYSOPHRASE HINKS (their daughter's friend)
HECTOR PENDLETON (their daughter's friend's friend)
THE PERFECT STRANGER

Friends, relations, acquaintances and servants of the Hartops, Hinks and Pendletons ad lib., as they don't appear.

Time. Breakfast time. Or to be more specific, the hour at which the Hartop family habitually eat breakfast. This, in a theater, would probably be between

eight-thirty and eleven p. m.

Scene. The dining room of the Hartop's apartment on Riverside Drive. The apartment is on the seventh floor, and contains seven bedrooms, seven living rooms and seven bath rooms. The reason for this is that Mr. Hartop, being the seventh son of a seventh son and having inherited at the age of seven an income of seventy thousand dollars and seven cents (exactly), is somewhat superstitious on the subject of sevens.

The dining room is in the front of the apartment and through each of the seven small windows in the west wall may be seen the same view of the Hud-

son and the Jersey coast.

The west wall is the back wall of the scene. At right angles to this wall, one at each end, are the side walls. In the middle of each side wall is a door.

The fourth wall is, of course, the customary frightful draught, through which the actor hopefully suspects the presence of friends among the audience.

There is a table in the middle of the room, set for breakfast for four people, viz.: the Hartop family and Miss Chrys'phrase Hinks.

Miss Hinks' place may be readily recognized by the fact that her napkin is tied around with a piece of embroidered satin ribbon, while those of the family are rolled up and inserted in

heavy gold napkin rings.

This piece of ribbon also establishes the fact that the young lady in question has been a guest in the Hartop apartment for more than one week. It being an unbreakable rule of the Hartop family that a guest's napkin, during the first week of his or her stay, be placed folded and unadorned at his or her plate, but that after that time it be bound round with a piece of embroidered satin ribbon for a lady or pierced with a gold safety pin for a gentleman.

There is no food on the table, but its presence is suspected in the kitchen, which is only divided from the dining room by the butler's pantry, the door of which is in the middle of the right

wall.

When the curtain rises the room is empty. After a short pause, a thin spiral of steam leaks through the keyhole of this door, accompanied by an appetizing odour of freshly baked bread, puffed rice, patent coffee, eggs, bacon, newly opened sardines, marmalade,

milk, sugar, pepper and salt.

In the distance is heard the noise of splashing from seven bathtubs, six of which are filled with hot water and the seventh with cold.

Through the windows a large expanse of blue sky may be seen, and during the action of the play, birds fly across, little pieces of paper flutter up and are whirled about by the wind, clouds float lazily by and a thin column of blue smoke suggests either a fire on the Jersey coast or someone leaning out of the window below, smoking a cigar.

On the table, two pathetic flies are conversing together in whispers. The subject of their conversation is unimportant and no sound of it should reach

the audience.

Enter Hector Pendleton through door on left. He is dressed in morning coat, lavender waistcoat, dark purple trousers, patent leather shoes and washleather gloves. His right hand is in his pocket and in his left he carries an ebony cane, a silk hat, a large bouquet of roses, a packet of cigarettes, two United Cigar Store twenty-five-cent certificates and a newspaper. He walks as a man accustomed to the desire to wear silk underwear but lacking the means. In this, however, he is deceptive, having both the means and the underwear.

Depositing his hat and various belongings on a chair, he crosses to table and picks up the menu. Having decided to eat everything on the card, he signs his name at the foot of it and slips it under the door of the butler's pantry. This done, he takes up his newspaper, lights a cigarette and sits down in a chair by the window to read. The calm beauty of the morning, the shining surface of the Hudson and the pleasant anticipation of an ample breakfast combine to lull him to sleep. His head falls forward, the newspaper falls from his hand, the cigarette from his lips. He sleeps.

The sound of splashing has ceased, and now the noises of dressing are

heard. Opening and shutting of closet doors, the soft thud of powder puffs on the tips of sleep-flushed noses and the scrape of a new razor blade on a hirsute chin.

At length the heavy tread of WIL-LIAM HARTOP is heard off stage as he approaches the dining room down the long hallway, pausing ever and anon to look with interest at his collection of pictures. It is evident from the sound of his footsteps that the pictures grow more exciting as he approaches the dining room, until the climax is reached with a large engraving of Mr. Hartop himself in full Masonic regalia.

The glass of this picture has a slight crack near one of the lower corners of the frame. The presence of this crack annoys Mr. Hartop, and he enters his dining room with a frown on his clean-

shaven forehead.

Mr. HARTOP is a gentleman of midage. He is rich and owns, beside this apartment, a house in Gramercy Square, a camp in Maine, a villa in Florida, and a side show in Coney Island. All this he has inherited. In addition, he has acquired a very complete collection of cigar bands, tastefully mounted, and a talent for research. This talent he has been directing for some years past to discovering the "reason" for Instant Postum. His labors have not been altogether in vain and he hopes soon to be in possession of the secret. In appearance he is somewhat stout, somewhat florid, clean shaven, with small hands and feet, one of his feet being even smaller than the other. Altogether an interesting piece of characterization for an ambitious actor.

Without noticing the sleeping Pendleton in the window, he approaches the breakfast table and sits down with his back to the window and presses the concealed electric bell. A tinkle is heard in the kitchen, but no one answers. He rings several times with increased impatience, then remembering that this is the butler's morning out, he goes to the pantry in search of food, returning after a brief pause with a

heavily laden tray.

The two flies, who had lapsed into a discouraged silence, liven up at the approach of food and break into a brisk conversation, interrupted by certain gymnastic exercises to induce a greater appetite.

In the meantime, Mr. Pendleton is slowly burning up in his chair by the window. His lighted cigarette, falling on his newspaper, has set it on fire and the newspaper has, in its turn, set fire to

Mr. Pendleton.

During all the preceding action, therefore, Mr. Pendleton burns. At first slowly, gently, almost imperceptibly, but gaining in violence, until, taking his cue from the moment when the older of the two flies starts to eat the remains of Mr. Hartop's puffed rice he bursts into a sheet of flame.

Mr. Hartop, noticing the suddenly increasing temperature of the room, rises and walks up stage with the intention of opening some of the windows. Surprised at the sight of flames he leaves the room in search of the patent

fire-extinguisher.

Mr. Pendleton must not be portrayed by a man who is at all inclined to embonpoint, as it is essential that he burn quickly and completely. The chair on which he is burnt is of fireproof material, so that nothing in the room is changed except Mr. Pendleton, who becomes a small heap of ashes on the chair and another smaller heap on the floor.

After a pause Mr. Hartop returns with the fire-extinguisher. Finding no fire and apparently no damage, he goes out again to return the extinguisher to

its accustomed hook.

Almost immediately after his exit, Mrs. Hartop enters by the same door. She is a medium-sized blonde, exactly the same age as her husband and looks it, though he doesn't look his age, which might be anywhere between forty-six and forty-seven, and, in fact, is. She was born in Nantucket, in the light house, inadvertently, and has been striving, ever since, to appear as though she had been born on Fifth Avenue, on purpose. She is an amiable woman,

however, and suffers from paralysis of the throat and ear. She can see very clearly in several directions at once.

She goes straight into butler's pantry and returns with a glass of sherry and two crackers. These she places on the table and, sitting down, begins to read her correspondence. Her husband returns, bows to his wife and sits down once more to his breakfast. Finding that it has grown cold in his absence, he pushes his plate from him, rises and walks up and down in obvious irritation. Then, his eye falling on his wife's frugal meal, he approaches her chair from behind and waving his left hand close to her face to distract her attention, he stealthily endeavors to gain possession of her glass of sherry from the other side. His wife's strangely constituted vision, however, enables her to foil this attempt and with a glance of contempt at the cracker, on which the two inebriated flies are now torpidly sleeping, he retires up stage to the chair by the window still partially occupied by the charred remains of Hector Pen-DLETON.

Taking out his handkerchief, he dusts the deceased visitor off the chair, and sitting down, resumes his newspaper.

At this moment a rustle of silk skirts and the scampering of light feet are heard off stage, and Marigold Hartop and Chrysophrase Hinks enter the room.

Marigold is a girl of seventeen (so is Chrysophrase). She has brilliant red hair, an honest, open, freckled face, with no pretensions to good looks, and large feet, one of which is even larger than the other. Altogether a very likable girl. She is enthusiastic about everything and obviously adores Chrysophrase.

MISS HINKS is tall, slim and very, very blonde. She might have been designed throughout by Howard Chandler Christy. Her attitudes are charming, but the transition from one attitude to another is such a long and complicated business that she usually decides on an attitude in the morning and remains in it all day. On this occasion, she swims

into the room and sinks into a chair at the table in attitude of radiant girlish health combined with a radiant girlish appetite, and the simple charm of a well-bred woman of the world, who, having come to breakfast ravenously hungry, discovers that there is nothing to eat. Marigold kisses her mother, and is about to perform the same operation on her father, when her mother restrains her and, pointing to Mr. HAR-TOP in his chair by the window, conveys with a look the fact that the head of the family is asleep. Marigold therefore goes, instead, to the pantry in search of food for herself and her friend.

She returns with two grapefruit, a pot of tea, some parmesan cheese, two pats of butter and the Perfect Stran-GER, who is seated on one of the pats of butter, washing his face. MARIGOLD divides the food equally between CHRYSOPHRASE and herself and sits down. The Perfect Stranger leaves his pat of butter and goes over to inspect the other two flies, still sleeping on their piece of cracker. Even as he looks, Mrs. Hartop's jeweled hand descends and, taking up the cracker with its living burden, conveys it to her mouth. Their horrible fate alarms the Perfect Stranger, unused as he is to the family and their ways, and he

flies blindly in the direction of the window, alighting, breathless, on Mr. Har-TOP's closed right eye. This causes Mr. HARTOP to wake up and open his eyes and the Perfect Stranger es-

capes through the window.

Mr. Hartop rises, yawns, and comes once more to the table, where he absentmindedly kisses Chrysophrase in mistake for his daughter and Chryso-PHRASE returns the caress with a tactful assumption of a similar absence of mind. Turning from the table, Mr. HARTOP notices the hat, cane, etc., of the late Mr. Pendleton on a chair in the center of the stage. He gazes at them for a full minute, lost in thought, then his gaze travels to the little heap of ashes by the window. He nods thoughtfully, with his face toward the audience, then, crossing to a writing desk, he sits down and begins to compose an obituary notice of the late HECTOR PENDLE-TON for the New York Times.

SLOW CURTAIN

First Tableau. Mr. Pendleton burn-

Second Tableau. The two flies dis-

cussing the breakfast.

Third Tableau. All the company on. Ranged in line up stage, they think about the late Mr. PENDLETON, each in a different way.



CAROL

By John McClure

THE month can never forget the year; The moth can never forget the fire; And I can never forget my dear Lady of High Desire.

The earth can never forget the sun; The day can never forget the night; And I can never forget the one Lady of My Delight.

THE WRONG IDEA

By G. W. Hamilton

HEN they had seen Alan Weston married to his Nevada heires, a number of his friends crossed the Avenue from St. Thomas' and adjourned to their common club, where they discussed with great earnestness matrimony, green bay trees and the fortunes of the wicked.

"She's a beauty," Jevons declared.

"She's a beauty."

"If you like pale women with hungry green eyes and thin lips like flames, I suppose she is," his friend Ricker admitted. "But she's not my type of beauty. Now there," and he pointed out a passer-by, "there's my idea of

what a woman should be."

Jevons craned his neck to see, and then shook his head. "What makes you like such massive brunettes?" he asked plaintively. "She would make exactly two of the type I like." He was plainly impressed by the lady who had just become the bride of his friend, Alan Weston, and turned to an elder man who had been selecting a cigar with great care. "What do you think of her, Scott?"

Scott was proud of his reputation as a cynic and a mentor to men less experienced than he in the world's ways. According to Scott's way of thinking, a cynic was a man who was clever enough to tread on his fellows' corns and persuaded them it was good for them. He admired himself for the fearless manner in which he pointed out other men's mistakes and indicated the paths of duty. He had never met Mrs. Alan Weston and her type was uncommon, but he was plainly expected to tell these two younger men his impressions.

"Alan described her to me as having a Madonna face. I plainly see now that he is not a judge of art. But"—and he paused impressively, "I plainly see that he is in love with her. Men only speak of Madonna faces when they are serious. The amazing thing about the woman, to me, is that she has captured him absolutely."

"The amazing thing to me," Jevons asserted, "is that he has got her and her money. I haven't got the reputation for being a safe guide for young girls, but I'm a spotless baa-lamb in comparison with him; and he goes and gets a prefty woman and millions!"

gets a pretty woman and millions!"

"Not my idea of a pretty woman,"
Ricker objected. "Too thin in the
bust and hip for me. I like 'em—"

"You like them by the ton, as we all know," Jevons snapped. "I tell you the woman is most unusual and has a strange, unusual sort of beauty. And she goes and marries him!" Jevons sighed, "I'd like to know why."

Scott smiled. "He is a better liar than you, dear Jevons, and when it is

necessary, he is less lazy."

"I don't see what that has to do with

it," Jevons answered.

"Everything," the cynic told him. "She told him she liked Marcus Aurelius. He thought it was a liqueur. Did he tell her so, as you would have done? Not a bit of it. He up and went to the club library, where I found him looking up the subjects of her conversation. It took him a week of solid effort to be able to talk about Memling, Marcus, Vorticism and Poltergeists with fair intelligence. You, Jevons, wouldn't have had the energy to try. He beat you fairly."

Jevons was out of temper and re-

sented Scott's manner.
"Rot!" he cried. "I don't agree

with you."

Scott looked at him with little favor. "I suppose you don't," he said. "If you did your attempts to wed with money would not have come to such consistent disaster. Do you suppose if any woman knew your real inner life you would have a ghost of a chance?"

"Be fair," Ricker urged. "Jevons is all right. Alan's gone the pace twice

as fast."

"But he had the sense to assume virtues," Scott explained. "He's going to read up the Britannica article on Ecclesiastical vestments to please her."

"That's the deuce of a thing to take away on a honeymoon!" Jevons cried.

"Do you think I'd do that?"

"You haven't the sense to," Scott retorted. "You would expect her to be as proud of your ignorance as you are. Alan planned out the whole campaign. It may be," and here Scott gave a tug at the small gray moustache which he hoped endowed him with a martial air,

"it may be I helped him."

"It won't last," Ricker observed. "I don't like her looks. I miss my guess if she hasn't the very devil of a temper. Now, those fine Junoesque dark women have tender hearts and the domestic instinct. That's the sort I'm going to marry. I believe in the woman who realizes that men have to be fed and fed damn well if they're to love their own hearthstones."

Jevons cut him short. "We all know your ideals," he said, "and they do not interest us. Of course it won't last.

She'll find him out."

"But by that time she will have grown so fond of him that it won't matter," Scott observed. "In confidence, I think he reckoned on that. You see, Alan is never so obvious as you, Jevons."

TT

THE Alan Westons, on their way from the church to the mansion that the bride's millionaire father had rented, seemed a singularly happy couple. Alan was a good-looking man of a wellknown family, and he had had the sense to confine his amorous quests to the class in which he moved. No show girl had sought to sue him for breach of promise and he was careful never to compromise the jeune fille unless it was absolutely necessary. Until this jade-eyed girl from the West had come to his notice he had not considered matrimony except as the conventional method by which a man of family, not rich, can exchange an assured social position for the means to keep it up more

fittingly.

How he had schemed and worked to How he had cursed that when after plucking bloom after bloom from the rosebud garden of girls he came upon one rose which seemed set too high for him, one rose worth more to him than all he had ever seen. Never had he felt so humiliated as when his father-in-law, a shrewd man, had questioned him as to his financial standing and made him swear to turn over many new leaves. No man was ever more anxious to come to fresh and cleaner chapters than Alan Weston. None more ready than he to condemn his former life as idle and worthless and to experience a wholly new thrill at the prospect of the domestic virtues.

The honeymoon was spent in Northern Italy, in an old palace looking out on the Isola Bella, where the Borromean Gardens, with their terraces of brilliant coloring, entranced the eye and charmed the senses. It seemed strange him that these beauties appealed more to him than to his wife. She was happier in her excursions to Milan, where there were crowds and stores, than on their pleasant trips on the lake.

In Milan he found himself to be a different man. No longer did he look about him to find out the prettiest wom-The prettiest woman in all the world was at his side, as other men testified by their admiration. He became suffused with virtue and more attractive than ever. That she believed in him wholly—for so he was serious in assuming—was no new experience. Most of the others had believed in him, too. But here was a woman in whom he believed absolutely and told her so a

dozen times in a day.

They came back to New York for the winter and entertained discreetly. Alan found his wife had a passion for society which rather troubled him. He had had enough of it to last him forever, but she chafed if an evening had to be spent at home unless it was the night when she gave a dinner or a dance.

Scott, the cynic of his rarely visited club, called with the intention of describing his experience to some of his fellow-members. He was skilled in probing matrimonial disillusion. He

walked to the club morosely.

"To think," he cried bitterly, when he had found Jevons and Ricker, "to think that Alan Weston should settle down to the paths of virtue!" He described the transformed Alan, whose eyes were constantly on the face of his wife and the air of conjugal affection that filled the air. "It's ludicrous!" he commented. "We all know what a roving taster of nectar Alan was, and now to see him drooling around like an old and affectionate aunt! If he had started to sew on tiny garments for future Westons I should not have been surprised."

"I don't understand it," Ricker remarked. "But then that type of wom-

an isn't my type."

Jevons looked down on him from his great height with scorn. Jevons, it may be remarked, was a singularly handsome man whose married sisters held sway in Newport and New York. He was an exceedingly eligible parti.

"We all know you will seek your wife from a cooks' employment agency," he said and sneered on the alimentative Ricker. "Mrs. Weston is a very fascinating woman, and her husband has the sense to know it, but—I don't think his vast experience is going to help him with her."

"Jevons is smitten," Ricker explained to the cynic. "How a slip of a flat-breasted woman like that appeals to a man is a mystery to me, but they do."

For the moment Scott's youth seemed very far away. He sighed and sought to re-establish his good spirits by tug-

ging at his moustache.

"She has never given you a look out of those green eyes of hers," he said slowly. He paused a moment as though in doubt—a rare state with him—"I'm not at all sure that Alan is going to be as happy as he expects."

III

THAT Alan Weston should be shamelessly devoted to one woman, and that woman his wife, aroused deep interest in the hearts of those who had formerly been loved by him. It was a phenomenon that demanded expert investigation and many women whose names appeared regularly in the society columns of the better papers appointed themselves committees of one to determine upon the veracity of the rumor. One lady, described as a leader in the smartest set, sneered openly at such reports and arrayed herself in amber and set out to call upon Mrs. Weston. If the reader possesses any aptness he will understand that the investigator was a brunette; and if by any chance he has a smattering of knowledge of what has recently happened in the beau monde he will wonder if he has guessed her

The lady in amber was very gracious. It is said that peculiarly ferocious tigers smile before they devour their victims. The lady in amber smiled.

"You must find it very different here in New York than in—in?"

"Nevada," said Mrs. Weston.

"Thanks so much. Than in Ne-

Mrs. Weston smiled faintly and the amber lady was grieved that there was no touch of anything but Paris in those beautiful things she wore.

"There are differences," she admitted. "One sees here, for instance,

the people about whom one reads in Ne-

vada in the society papers."

"So you get society papers in Nevada?" The lady in amber lifted her delicate eyebrows in surprise.

"Oh, yes," the other assured her, "they interest us enormously. I was very much entertained by the accounts of your divorce which I read."

"Really?" said the amber lady with less graciousness, "I suppose you, in Nevada, thought that sort of thing

very, very wicked."

"Hardly that," Mrs. Weston re-"It seemed more silly turned gently. than wicked. So unwise of you to write such letters to him. Even then you were not an impulsive schoolgirl, were

you?"

The amber lady, a very magnificent woman in her way, and proficient in the art of killing by a look, flung her haughtiest glance at this Nevadan to find it met with that half smile which had for its foundation amusement and perhaps contempt. It was so little what the dark woman expected that she failed to keep herself thoroughly well in hand.

"It is not customary in my set for strangers to take such a deep interest in the private affairs of others." She said it rather well and felt, as she had often done in her insincerest moments,

that the stage needed her.

"I hadn't noticed that," Mrs. Weston said politely. "I have found the people here so delightfully friendly. They have told me-wasn't it nice of them? -so much about my husband's history that I can reconstruct it from infancy up, just as anatomists can do with a collection of bones."

"You will hardly have time to be idle," the other woman retorted.

"Not a moment," Mrs. Weston assured her. "You know, we in Nevada have an idea that society—the one with the capital S-is hollow and false. I find it quite a mistaken idea."

"That must be very cheering," the

lady in amber commented.

"It is," Mrs. Weston answered. "You, for example, have come here, I'm sure, to tell me something about Alan. You feel that it is your duty to tell me and you couldn't bear not to do your duty, could you?"

"I?" gasped the dark woman. "What should I have to tell you about him?"

She had come with the intention of telling the bride that Alan had loved her once and even now would come back to her like a dog at the sound of his master's whistle. But her plans were miscarrying.

"Weren't you and he such good friends once?" her hostess asked. "You have a hundred interesting memories to tell. Please don't disappoint me!"

"Your husband is abominably conceited," the other cried angrily. "He probably imagines more women are in love with him than any other man in his set."

"That's the worst of those good-looking men, isn't it?" Mrs. Weston said pleasantly. "They get so fearfully spoiled."

It was at this moment Alan Weston came into the room. He stopped for a moment when he saw the visitor and frowned. He advanced to her with anything but a good grace.

"How well you look, Alan," the am-

ber lady said cooingly.

He was not pleased at her use of his first name and looked a little appre-

hensively at his wife.

"We had a glorious time in Europe," "We did what we wanted he returned. to do and hadn't to see people who bored us. There were no demands on our time or patience but what we made ourselves. I was never less joyful to get back."

The lady in amber was possessed of large experience in matters of the heart. These rumors she had scorned were true; there could be no doubt about that. She knew in a flash that this man who had given her such bad moments was in love this time and that those other episodes, of which hers was not the least important, were forgotten, or, if remembered, regretted.

"Dear old Alan," she murmured, and placed an affectionate hand on his arm.

"this atmosphere of domestic bliss is perfectly enchanting. One hardly knows you. And you've actually endured a year of it. Is it going to last?"

"Why shouldn't it?" he snapped. "Remember I've never been married be-There was an unnecessary

stress on the pronoun.

The visitor ignored it and turned her radiant smile on the other woman.

"It's the most satisfying domestic idyll I have ever met," she declared.

"Isn't it?" Mrs. Weston agreed. "Sargent is going to paint us hand in

And so the lady in amber went out, defeated and raging. She had come to sow discord and had met domestic love as a buffer.

When the door was closed Alan turned to his wife. "Damn that woman," he said.

"Is that necessary?" she asked.

"I don't want you to make a friend of her," he cried. "She's a dangerous woman who never told the truth even to her friends." He paused a bit nervously. "What did she come for?"

"Oh, the usual thing," his wife told "They descant on your virtues and the love you used to bear them. It's

quite interesting."

"Damned cats!" he snarled angrily.

"And they don't even tell the truth, do they?" She looked at him keenly, and he cursed his new inability to lie with that graceful fluency that had brought him out of many a scrape.

"They are jealous of you," he countered. "That's all it means. Anyone

could see through that."

She shook her head. "I'm afraid not. Alan. I have had too many confidences. One woman even returned me a score of letters you had written her. I am told that the woman who just went claimed you for a year or more, as long, in fact, as I have had you."

"But what a difference!" he exclaimed. "I had an affair with her. Everyone knew it, but it was just an affair that one gets into without thinking and puts aside when one is tired. I admit I played the fool rather thoroughly, but, by God, that's done with. You say you've only had me as long as she did. Darling, you've got me as long as life lasts and beyond that if we have consciousness. Can't you see what a difference there is? I lived in a world without sunshine until you came. All that folly I thought I liked is done with. I am jealous of every hour that we spend apart. I am jealous of every man you speak to, I-"

He paused when a servant announced that a Mr. Harris had called by appointment and was waiting in the li-

brary

"Who is he?" Alan asked and then smiled. "You see, darling, it's true; I'm jealous of this unknown Harris."

She disengaged the arm that he sought to put about her.

"He is a lawyer," she said.

"What do you want with a lawyer?" he demanded.

That half smile that she flung at him was one he had never been able to fathom. Sometimes he had thought it one of amusement and occasionally he felt it expressed the enjoyment of an emotion whose source was hidden from him. Jokingly he had called it her La Gioconda look.

"Can't you guess?" she asked.

"My God!" he cried. "Aren't you going to give me a chance?"
"To do what?" she demanded.

"To prove that I love you and you alone and never want to look at another woman. I loathe the man I was.

I am a different being now."

"My dear Alan," she said, interrupting his fine frenzy. "You don't quite understand. All my life I have looked forward to the day when my father would become rich enough to buy me this." She pointed to the rare furnishings of the exclusive rooms. "I wanted this of nothing. There were rich men in Carson City who wanted to marry me, and when I was at a school in Paris I met Americans whom I might have married if I'd been fool enough to throw myself away on poor men.

wanted New York and Newport, and I have them. The trouble with you, Alan, is you never understood me. You thought I was the domestic being you wanted to be." She shook her head. "The idea appals me. I want the butterfly life and nothing else. I want the sort of life you used to lead, the kind of existence I expected you to go back to when the novelty of me had worn off."

"You don't know what you are say-

ing," he cried.

"I do so well," she said quietly. "It is you who are making the mistake. You seem to think I married you because you were virtuous. There was a certain fascination about you when first we met, but now—"

"But now?" he echoed hoarsely.
"To be frank," she admitted with her inscrutable smile, "you bore me."



THE LUTANIST

By Harold Hersey

I WHISPER softly in the vainest heart, I scorn the fury of the strong; Like wine I make the jaded senses start And cloak my coming in a song.

Along the borders of the wind I run, Over the hills at break of day; Between the shadows and the evening sun I lift my lute and softly play.

I am the winter in the heart of spring, I race around the world at will, I stir the world with endless murmuring Of wondrous music never still.

I whisper through the darkness of the night, And in the twilight of the years To every wasted heart my music's flight Brings silence and the end of tears.



N an emergency that calls for drastic measures, tell the truth. It is confusing.



WOMEN who marry for money deserve double chins.



TROPICAL MIDNIGHTS—AND BOSTON

By Lillian F. Barrett

TT was a marvelous day, sky and sea at their bluest, and as Dick Ledyard, young and eagerly twenty-one, sprawled full length on the beach, he quite gave himself up to the wonder of it all. Dick was a New England boy, a queer odd combination of Puritan reticence and infinite little enthusiasms. To the world he presented an unruffled, imperturbable front that quite belied the busy imagination and capacity for romance and adventure that were so much

a part of his real self.

To-day, particularly, as he lay back and watched the wisps of cloud against the blue, and let the white hot sand slip softly through his fingers, he felt that strange recurrent desire for something he couldn't define, a restlessness that haunted. And there was a girl connected with that restlessness, a girl with shadowy hair and strange, dark eyes. He had seen her about the beach, watched her and speculated. She might have been twenty; and yet again she might have been considerably more, for there was at times a weary droop to the slight figure, and the eyes showed dark as with suppressed sadness.

But she was beautiful, infinitely beautiful, and of strange allure. And today he had caught a vague glimpse of her strolling into the Beach Club. He had wanted, intensely wanted, to follow her, but something held him back. Timidity, perhaps, for the gay set that made for easy morality and gaming leisure was quite outside his ken and he was afraid to blunder. And then, too, perhaps, roulette as a Sunday morning's diversion did not quite fit into his

scheme of morality. So the New England in him condemned all these gay people, flocking for their pleasure to the club, and kept him kicking his heels on the sand, while the eternal youth of him cried out for adventure and excitement and—the girl with the dark eyes and dusky hair.

Eternal youth came out ahead, however, and about three o'clock the young man, shaking the sand from his white flannels, sauntered with a fair show of ease and indifference into the long gam-

bling room of the club.

At first he was a bit confused, dazed by the shifting crowds, but gradually things took on their true proportions and he began to distinguish various people he had met at his own hotel. A casual "Are you playing, Ledyard?" choked the blood back to his heart. He was of a sudden ashamed of his untried innocence, his ignorance of everything that this buzzing, laughing world took so easily for granted.

"Playing?" Good God, he didn't know how to

play.

He must get out before he was fully exposed in all his crudity and silly simplicity. But at that point the uncertain crowd shifted again and everything seemed focused on the figure of the girl with the eager eyes, seated at one of the tables. Her face showed white, though without pallor as without color, and the tenseness of her attitude showed the strain of her nerves. Beside her, insolently alounge, leaned a man of the rather coarse, sporting type of which our great cities breed so many.

Dick had thought much about wom-

en, had read largely on the subject, too, and felt quite competent to place at once anyone of the fair sex whom he might encounter. There were good women; he would marry one some day and she would do honor to his name. And there were bad women, for the most part the cheap sort one sees around a college town, or the highly bedizened creatures of the cafés of New York and Paris and London.

To be sure, he had dreamed romantically that there were women, beautiful women of pure profile and clear skin, who had sinned. (Dicky still admitted the decalogue and always felt strangely unstrung when the minister began on the "Thou shalt not's.") He had always known of a certainty that he would fall for just that kind of woman, and had obtained a pleasurable excitation of the senses from the contemplation of such an affaire.

But here, now, face to face with this girl of strange and undoubted charm, this girl, so intent on her stakes and the turn of the wheel, he felt at a loss. Who—what was she? The man beside her leaned closer and Dick felt a little

sick and moved away.

Then, on a sudden, he turned back.

She was looking at him.

He met quite steadily the dark eyes, and felt the speculation in their depths. They rested so a minute; that was all. Dick rushed out into the air, tremulous and unstrung, but decidedly under the impression that it was all damned jolly—and why shouldn't you play roulette on Sunday? And why should we demand that a woman—

But at that daring point in his reflections the image of the man flashed out, too heavy a background for such a lovely picture. He recalled the easy familiarity of the two with a guilty feeling, the sort he'd experienced once when induced by a college chum to browse a bit in some of Balzac's Contes. He felt he was taking a peep into that underworld of lurid affairs and passions that had up to now seemed so entirely of the yellow-backed novel.

Yes, he was getting down to real life

now, and he felt himself quite of a quiver as he dressed for the dance that night at the Poinciana.

He must meet her—yes, he must meet her, come what may. The dark eyes held him in thrall, and he deliberately shut out the image of the man.

She was sitting alone on an old stone bench trailed with creepers when he found her. The spot seemed singularly remote, with only an occasional soft strain of music drifting through the trees as a reminder of the evening's gaiety. It was eleven o'clock and the moon was struggling up the blue wall of the heavens, throwing a fitful light over the garden and an old fountain nearby and the girl in her clinging white gown. He sat down quietly beside her, and they looked into each other's eyes. There was a brooding melancholy and strange intensity in hers that gripped him and made him feel capable of most supreme heroics in her behalf.

"You are not happy," he took the initiative boldly, boyishly, Henry-Arthur-Jonesly. "You are tired of all this—the lights and the music and—you know

-roulette and all that."

She showed no surprise at the opening remark, but roused herself a little and studied him attentively, as he fol-

lowed up his vein of thought.

"I saw you gambling this afternoon. It's an awful strain—I gave it up entirely a few years ago— It—it got on my nerves. Of course you've played at Monte—"

"Yes," she answered in a sweet low voice that seemed languid from a weight of suppressed emotion. Then

she sighed and turned away.

He took in quite thoroughly her glorious hair and the wonder of her profile against the shadowy background of the shrubbery. She listened to the plash of the fountain and he thought he detected a sharp little intake of her breath as she said,

"The women at Monte Carlo—you,

of course, condemn-"

"Why should I?" He was positively masterful. "All this rot about double standards, you know—a woman has a

right to live her own life. You've lived

yours, haven't you?"

He felt for a second that perhaps he'd probed too far, for there was a glint of something in her eyes that might have been resentment, and yet again it might have been only amusement.

"Wonderful, for a theory—" she said, evasive of his query. "But a man doesn't marry a woman like that, a woman like—," She hesitated and looked at him appealingly.

"Like you?" he said softly.

"Like me," she faintly murmured, and gave him a grateful look for his astuteness.

Dick had read of circles where men and women took each other's little moral indiscretions for granted, circles of free thought and bold discussion. He congratulated himself now on his lucky remark "Like you?" for by so doing he had put the girl quite at her ease and shown her that he, too, moved in a plane where fleshly frailties were looked upon quite as a matter of course.

He had a tremendous thrill at the novelty of it all. To start out at once on the premises that a woman has made short work of the decalogue might have proved a dangerous proceeding; the success of this particular coup argued that it had been managed well. So he had placed the lady in the right category after all.

"Why not?" he said calmly.

"Would you marry a woman likelike—" Again she faltered and her nervousness was apparent as she rose and faced him.

He looked at her slender figure drooping slightly in surrender to fatigue, and then into the dark eyes that made him think of Italian midnights and Bourbon roses. He thought of all the passion that had been hers, the vivid hours that no repentance or suffering could efface.

Then of a sudden she was in his arms and they clung together, unmindful of everything in the world but the warm

reality of each other.

And then she had slipped away and

he was left alone in the moonlight, dazed and confused.

But by and by he lit a cigarette, and the garden seemed less lonely.

П

THAT was the beginning of an affair that gained a poignant charm from the fact that it was carried on clandestine-Each day's intercourse brought them closer together. At times they were gay and frank and companionable; at others they touched tragic depths and talked in low tones of inexorable Destiny and brute force of circumstance. The girl mentioned the lights of Paris and achieved a heartbreaking sigh in retrospect.

He mentioned the yellow Mimosa. The dark eyes became almost lurid as she cried out with a passionate intensity—"Ah, don't, its fragrance oppresses—it—brings back—oh!—lots of

Dick felt himself a brute, so he kissed her tenderly, and pressed her to him.

"I understand, dear," he murmured, and felt that life was giving him too much.

Then they talked of things Dick had never mentioned to a girl before. He discussed his room-mate's infatuation for a little waitress in New Haven, spoke of it largely as a "liaison," and hinted at consequences. And again-"Passion," he said, "what is it?" He disposed of the question with a sweep of the hand and a shrug that implied exhaustive knowledge of the subject.

They met in the early morning and watched the sun rise together. They bathed in remote corners of the beach and lay in the white glory of the sand. They stole out in the pensive twilight and, close together, talked of the transitoriness of life, of sin and sorrow and suffering. And the dark eyes of the girl would cloud and grow heavy with a weight of unshed tears. Moonlight and starlight, an ecstasy of tremulous romance, of gossamer dreams and tender realities!

It was all very wonderful and stimulating, and Dick gave himself up quite utterly to the strange mystery and ardor of it. That is, at first. But as time went on, in spite of the exhilaration gained from the daily intercourse, in spite of the thrills and heroics and determination to redeem this woman with a past by offering her a pure love, Dick had many bad moments by himself. The New England was not yet dead in him, and the image of the girl blurred very frequently into that of his quiet little gray-haired mother. What would she say to this woman of mystery and sad-

And then, there were all his girl cousins, jolly enough in their way, but so absolutely unawakened to the real vital issues of life. The conventional marriage with a girl of that particular conservative sort now seemed to him flat and dun-colored.

No, he could not possibly do it. He was willing to sacrifice family, ideas, ideals, everything, now that there had come into his existence this woman of fire and dreams. The memory of those recent kisses on his lips forged in him the determination to live his own life, regardless of those beloved ones in dear old Boston. Those kisses! Ah! They came to him laden with an exotic passion, with an intensity only a woman who had gone down deep into the heart of the things of the world could be capable of. Occasionally, the idea of the other men in the girl's life startled in him a protest, but for the most part they were too much vague abstract creatures of the shadowy past to disturb his equilibrium to any great ex-

But the man he had seen at the gambling table was constantly in his mind. That he was still in Palm Beach Dick knew for a fact, for he had encountered him one morning out on the raft. The older man had looked at Dick quite coolly and with an uncalled for thoroughness that roused the younger man's ire. But fearing to bring any distress to the girl, Dick had valiantly curbed his first inclination to knock the old

roué down, and had dived off the raft with a daring drive.

Dick had fumed and raved inwardly until the appointed hour of the next rendezvous. The girl came with tired eyes and languid steps. Dick held her to him and with a protest in his heart against the brute to whom she was sacrificing her young life so cruelly, he determined to end it all.

"Milly, you must marry me."

She gave a little cry of joy and strained to him.

Then, "Ah, no!" she cried almost wildly, "I cannot, I cannot. There are reasons. There is a reason—"

He covered the mouth with a kiss and a murmured "Darling!"

"Oh, Dick! If I were good—"
"But you're not," he said, "and what's more I'm glad of it—I want to live—I want love and passion and excitement—I want—just this."

He kissed her again and again with an insistent intensity, and then on a sudden he discovered she was weeping.

"I-I am going away forever-" she whispered.

This brought him startled surprise. "What? Don't you love me?" He forced her head back and looked into the lovely eyes, now heavy with tears.

"I would rather die than disappoint you," she sobbed and then with another burst of tears she clung to him desperately.

"But I know, dearest—I know everything—the man at the hotel with you the old brute—the roué."

She struggled away from him, and as he still held her, she struck out at him and there was an almost fierce anger in her eyes. Then on a sudden a shadow fell across the sand and they turned to meet the other man.

"Well?" There was a coolness in his voice and a rather amused twinkle in his eye. "What have you to say for yourself?"

Dick choked, swallowed hard and answered in a voice he hardly recognized as his own: "I'm ready when you are."

The older man showed faint surprise. "Your name's Ledyard," he said.

"I've found that out and know all about you—"

"You've been spying, have you?"

burst out Dick.

"As you will," said the other calmly. "Got any money?"

"What!" shouted Dick. "You want

money!"

"No, I don't, but *she* will." He indicated the girl still weeping hysterically

ically.

"Damn you, you blackguard—you've ruined her life and now—now—you're trying to spoil her chances with me. You—you—"

Dick was on the older man in all the fury of his young strength, but the girl was between them.

"Father," she cried, and Dick crumpled at the word.

"Good Heavens-I-"

"Oh, that's all right—I take it you didn't know. I'm Mr. Carrol—chaperoning Milly till her mother comes on. It's Milly's first winter out of school. I don't seem to have qualified awfully well—eh?"

He looked at the two young

people staring into each other's eyes.

"Great heavens!" he said. "Don't take it so seriously. I give my blessing gladly. You see—" he turned to Dick confidentially, "she had her heart set on you from the moment she saw you.

you from the moment she saw you and, er, she, too, was born in New England—and, er, she always wanted to be an actress—and, well—the hearth's a

much safer place than—"

But at that Milly achieved an even bigger sob than before, and Mr. Carrol left them with a pantomimic hint that Dick immediately followed up. Milly huddled in his arms.

"You forgive me?" she faltered.

"Yes," he said, and in a way he meant it, for you can't stamp out New England.

But the kiss of forgiveness was a little tepid. The soul of him was satisfied perhaps, but the flesh cried out for the woman of fire and dreams. The hearth and the cradle! Tropical midnights and Bourbon roses! He sighed a little as they drew apart—

"But anyway," he said to her, "Mother will love you better this way."



REGINALD DE TWA

By J. W. Sayre

DESPERATE remedies have been known not to cure desperate diseases. Penniless, starving, Reginald DeTwa walked moodily down the main thoroughfare. At the curb stood a motor-car in which sat a beautiful young woman, wrapped in furs worth thousands. Acting on sudden impulse, and remembering that, from all he had ever read, the young woman, hearing his story, would first pity him, then love him and finally marry him, Reginald jumped into the car and sat down beside her.

Without waiting for explanations, however, the heiress gave a whispered direction to her chauffeur, and in a few minutes Reginald was locked up at police headquarters. The next morning arrangements were made which assured

him of regular meals for sixty days.



THE shortest cut to morality is the commission of enough sins to make virtue a novelty.

LE DÉLIEUR

By Curt Hansen

HEY will tell you in Agarreaux that after two bottles of Le Délieur, M. de Pronss will reveal the name of the last woman he loved. that after three bottles, Maître Siègle will tell you where his treasures are hidden. M. de Pronss has always been the pattern of discreet lovers and Maître Siègle has gravely abused the right of a Norman notary to be a miser. You may see from that in what esteem the unloosening virtues of the famous wine are held.

Nobody ventured to suggest what would happen after four bottles.

You must not suppose that M. le Marquis lightly or recklessly served Le Délieur to all his guests at all occasions. Far from it. For all the open-handedness and gayety which M. de Glinchy's sixty-five years had in no wise abated, there was a delicate and unconcealed raillery in the way he served his wine. At formal dinners, when the President of the Court and the Deputy and the Prefect of the Department were invited, he served a heavy musty port and some of the Beaujolais that was laid down in the time of the late Marquis. The Burgundy, he used to say, gave these worthy magistrates visions of the ésprit they would like to attain, and the port prevented them from reaching it.

So it was with others. As for Le Délieur, a few bottles were brought out only in the most intimate of the Marquis' little gatherings. Mme. Altieres would almost invariably be there. Sometimes M. Altieres. The Abbé Courceau, of course. Vaudin, the famous shot, with his constantly varying stories of big game shooting in the

Congo. M. de Pronss, perhaps, with his saintly profile and his exquisitely graceful little hands. Generally, too, Maroisin, hereditary steward of the Glinchy estates. Some seven or eight others, men and women whose discretion would bear the rather severe test

it was sometimes put to.

One did not always wait for M. le Marquis. It was a standing rule that supper be served at eleven, whether he was there or not. And his guests on these occasions would even have Le Délieur decanted before his arrival—if he was very late—although it was his particular delight to offer the first glass to Mme. Altieres with the gallant hope that Délieur would unlock her heart as it did the tongues of others.

But he was quite too hospitable to insist upon his right, and, if he was unduly delayed, Maroisin nodded to the butler, and the little company said "Ah!" with unaffected satisfaction.

Unfortunately, the wine had the defects of its qualities. More than once. the raciest of secrets had escaped from the half-unwilling lips of those gathered at the Marquis' table. And equally often, their hearts sank when, moistening his lips at his fourth glass, Vaudin began to recount again what happened when his beaters scattered in all directions at the charge of the lioness.

But they listened politely.

"Only two new incidents, this time," Mme. Altieres murmured on one occasion, to her neighbor. "Our poor Vaudin is getting old. The last time he added five thrilling situations."

But aloud she said, "Superb! all this on your very first hunt!"

"Always so, Madame. In every place

in which I hunted it was my first hunt that was most successful. I remember.

in Cochin-China-"

"It is an illusion of youth," hurriedly interrupted old Count de la Morille, "an illusion due to the strength of first impressions. Our first loves, our first hunts, our first adventures! Isn't it so, de Pronss?"

The gallant de Pronss sighed. is no illusion. It is a fact. Once—"

The company's eyes lit up.

De Pronss shook his head and filled another glass. "She was a princess of a reigning house. Mon Dieu! how I loved her!"

"Your first love, no doubt, Mon-

sieur," said Mme. Altieres.

"My very first," replied de Pronss.

"Vaudin is right."

The discussion became animated. New bottles were brought to the table. "M. de Pronss is right," contended

Maroisin. "My first act when I succeeded my father was to cut down the body of feu M. le Marquis, when I came to announce my father's death."

A shudder ran through the company. This was a subject which even Le Délieur rarely brought up.

It was really never absent.

Back in the very recesses of everyone's mind there always lurked the thought of that grisly secret of the Glinchy's, the mystery that shrouded the death of the last previous holder of the title, a cousin of the present Marquis. That he had been found hanging to the rafter in the corner of that very room, forty-two years ago, was known; that little Suzette, daughter of his forester, lay dead at his feet, was also well known. The obvious explanation that he had shot her and hanged himself was universally accepted, but from time to time, as people sat in the room and observed the old stained woodwork near the closet, you found yourself wondering whether, after all, the last word had been said on the subject.

So Maroisin's reference made the rest momentarily uncomfortable, and the discomfort was increased when the Abbé Courceau, for the first time in his life, insisted on pursuing the sub-

"Was it you, M. Maroisin, or the préfet who noticed that the girl had been stabbed as well as shot?" he asked.

The old Count turned with shocked

surprise to his friend.

"Abbé," he protested, "one can speak

on pleasanter topics."

"I was just thinking," said the Abbé, "of what Vaudin said. It is always the first incident in one's career that is the most extraordinary. He is right."
"But M. l'Abbé," urged Mme. Al-

tieres, "how does the fact you mention

show it?"

"It isn't altogether that," went on the Abbé. "I confess I was not thinking of Maroisin's experience but my own. I was twenty-five when I was ordained and began my ministrations here. It was just the year,—it was the very week of the old Marquis' death."

It was noticed for the first time how the old man trembled as he spoke.

"I heard my first confession," went on the Abbé as the others listened in silence, "in the church of this estate. My first penitent-"

He stopped and finished his glass. "My first penitent," continued the Abbé solemnly, "was the murderer of

the Marquis and Suzette."

A thrill ran through the company. Mme. Altieres felt ill. So it was not suicide, after all! A thousand questions leaped to the tongues of most of the "Who? Why? How?"

"Good Heavens, Abbé," cried De la Morille, "it isn't possible. Who could

possibly-?"

The Abbé shook his head. "Not another word. I fear-I fear I have al-

ready been too indiscreet."

It seemed, on the whole, best to change the subject. Mme. Altieres asked Vaudin for the Cochin-China story and it was a real relief to their over-stirred nerves to hear the hunter's harsh voice repeat for the twentieth time the all too familiar details of his escape from an infuriated leopard.

Vaudin was still in the midst of his story when the Marquis entered silently and took his usual place. He smiled to most of them individually and motioned to Vaudin to continue.

It was only afterward that he ex-

cused himself for his delay.

"It is this infernal company of which Maroisin has made me a director. It is profitable enough, I grant you, but what chatter-boxes these financiers are!"

Maroisin smiled.

The Abbé rose to go. "I must beg you all to pardon me," he said, "but——"

"Pooh!" expostulated the Marquis.

"Do you think I shall let you go so soon, Abbé? Nothing of the kind. Come, old friend, we two and Le Délieur, that is a trio that will not so soon exist again when any one of us is gone."

The Abbé hesitated.

"You must know, mesdames et messieurs," went on the Marquis, turning to the rest, "I have an almost filial claim on M. l'Abbé's affection."

There was a general laugh.

"It is a fact. I was the Abbé's very first penitent, forty—ever so many years ago. Is it not so, M. l'Abbé?"



NOCTURNE

By George Hallacy

T will be on a wonderful, snowy, stormy, cold winter night.

On a night when poor people who cannot buy any coal will freeze to death in their bare huts; when happy fathers will be sitting by the fireside enjoying the sweetness of married life; when cafés and ball-rooms will be filled with people to whom life means only pleasure and laughter.—

I shall be in a gorgeously furnished apartment. I shall wear evening dress and the Lucullan table in front of me will be covered with emptied champagne bottles; in the next room six mulattos will play ukaleles,—and to the sound of their weird Hawaiian melodies three beautiful women will dance for me. . . .

It will be on a wonderful stormy winter night such as this that I shall kill myself.



A SOUL SONG

By William Sanford

WANT to go to Heaven. I have hung to straps in the subway and on the Elevated and in the surface cars until I am weary.

I do not want to go to Hades; I want to go to Heaven, where there is plenty of room!



HIS FRIEND LANIN

By Donal Hamilton Haines

APTAIN PAUL DANFORTH lay stretched out on a cot in the great base hospital, staring fixedly at a single fly crawling across the white ceiling. During the six weeks that he had lain there, waiting for the slow healing of the jagged hole which a fragment of shell had dug in his leg, he had spent most of his time staring at the ceiling. In a way, he had been glad of the stretch of monotonous days during which there was nothing to interrupt his thinking.

For a year, the instant his mind was relieved from the pressure of duty, his mind had gone straight as an arrow to a certain point in his past, then worked slowly and methodically backward and

forward from that point.

All this hard thinking had left its mark. Danforth had not ceased to be an efficient officer, but there had gone out of him much of that fine open youthfulness which had won men's hearts.

As his eyes followed the crawling insect, Danforth's mind was already miles away across the Channel, busy with a painfully minute examination of that last evening of his normal life before the huge maw of war had opened and swallowed him.

He had been married exactly two years on that night which marked the end of that life into whose ruts he had comfortably settled. They were to have celebrated the anniversary by a modest little dinner, just Margaret and himself, with Stella Wallace and Bob Lanin for good measure. He had come home about four o'clock in the afternoon, depressed, rebellious, sick at heart with the news he carried. Lanin

was already there, squatting crosslegged on the lawn, plucking blades of grass from the turf, while Margaret Danforth swung lazily back and forth in an American lawn-swing.

Lanin had been the first to respond to Danforth's slowly spoken announcement. He had leaped to his feet with that nervous intensity which character-

ized all his movements.

"Why, Paul, you can't go!" he had said sharply. "You count for too many

other things."

Danforth had made the obvious replies, hating himself for a hypocrite, terribly conscious of the hollow sound of the phrases on his lips. He had stood gripping his wife's hand as he talked-Margaret had not spoken a word—his eyes roving about over the trim lawn to the low, sweeping lines of the house, beyond it across the gardens and the tennis court to the barns into which his prize Herefords were just being driven. These, these and the woman whose warm fingers rested in his were the fibres of his life! How balance them against such vague abstractions as patriotism and duty?

"You'll find," Lanin had gone on as Danforth remained silent, "that there'll be a sensible bit of weeding out. We have learned some things. We shan't dump the best of our blood into the

slaughter-house."

Danforth could remember the peculiarly direct look with which Lanin had accompanied the words. Then he had thought it only the result of strong feeling. He knew better now.

The little dinner of celebration had not even been mentioned. Stella had telephoned that her brother was leaving in the morning to join his regiment, and that she could not come. Lanin had been for leaving them alone, but both of them had urged him to stay, and he had finally consented. During dinner he had done most of the talking.

Danforth could not seem to remember anything that Margaret had said. It seemed to be only her silence which had left an indelible impression upon

his memory.

In the three days which had passed before he left home, he had adjusted himself without conscious effort to the situation. The phrases which, when he spoke them first, had been no more than the inevitable utterances dictated by pride of caste, had come to be the real expression of his sentiments. The extent and depth of his sacrifice had but served to mold his eagerness for action into something finer.

Above all else, he had been glad that Lanin was not an army man. It would have been hard on Margaret to have them both go at the same time. Lanin's cheerful, comforting optimism would mean much to her in the lonely days

that were bound to come.

With that hesitation common to men who find some difficulty in putting intimate matters into speech, he had not attempted to express his thoughts. But Lanin, with a delicacy which actually reached greater heights because of an appearance of brusque frankness, went straight to the core.

"See here, Paul," he had said, "you and I are a sensible pair of chaps, aren't we?"

"Why, yes," Danforth had replied.

"Well, then, let's look at this thing squarely. I'm entirely in your hands. If I'm in your house as much after you leave as I have been in the past, people are going to be nasty and talk no end. And if I keep away Margaret is going to suffer like the devil! And there you are! It's a matter for you to decide."

Paul had been deeply affected by the astonishing frankness of the speech. Nobody but Lanin, had been his thought, would have possessed the perfect combination of courage and discretion to have put the thought into words. He had been unable to make any reply other than to grip Lanin's hand.

So he had sailed from England with something of the spirit which must have imbued the Crusaders as they turned their faces to the east. He had been carried to a plane above personal consideration; his possible death had been dwarfed to the proportions of a casual incident. The one blinding fact was that he was going gloriously forth to serve his country, nerved to the utmost by all that he was putting behind him, while the sturdy figure of Lanin stood between Margaret and the faintest shadow of evil.

The change in the course of his thoughts and the process of his mind had been gradual. During the first six months of campaigning in Flanders, he had almost existed on the thought of what awaited him in England. Reading Margaret's letters had been a sort of rite. They were quite ordinary letters. He saw that clearly enough now, but at first they had seemed the eloquent, living expressions of a love that fairly passed all understanding.

Then, in the second October of the war, he had got a Mauser bullet through the shoulder, and had had six blessed weeks at home in which to recover. Margaret had met him at Dover, and cried in his arms most of the way

to London.

He had not seen much of Lanin dur-

ing the six weeks.

'We stay-at-homes," Lanin had explained, "have to work at least three times as hard because there are so infernally many of you chaps over there. And we get called 'slackers' into the bargain!"

And Margaret had added her word

of explanation.

"Bob told me he should have to make up for lost time the instant we knew you were coming. He has neglected his work terribly just to keep me from being utterly wretched."

In the course of the six weeks, Danforth and his wife had fallen back pretty much into the ways of the life that had been so rudely broken off. The war seemed remote. Yet between the home-coming of Danforth's imagining and the one which had actually taken place there had been a subtle, indefinable difference.

Consciousness of this had almost spoiled the last days of Danforth's leave. It had seemed to him that if he could put his finger on the thing it would vanish, and he had wasted unpleasant hours in futile pursuit of a phantom. He had received no help from Margaret, because the very nature of his difficulty precluded his asking for it

ing for it.

Yet this gave a certain direction to his thoughts. He felt that an unrestrained talk with her would clear the air, and this feeling brought him face to face with the fact that between them lay unplumbed depths into which he would have to plunge in pursuit of the elusive thing. And he could not nerve

himself to the leap.

After he returned to the battered ruins of the little French village where his regiment lay, Danforth's mind, which had always been simple and objective, suffered an introspective twist, and men had marked the change in him. He had set himself and Margaret in a sort of pillory and examined the two figures ruthlessly; he had subjected all the elements of his life to a terrific scrutiny. At first he had been merely puzzled, like a student who finds a slight error in his calculations.

But as his mind made greater demands as it became more analytical, he grew harassed and unhappy. He began to read Margaret's letters, not with the eyes of a lover, but with those of a physician searching for a hidden

malady.

Then in a flash the truth had burst upon him.

Lanin!

He passed through all the obvious emotions—conviction, doubt, certainty, rage, self-pity, then a sort of dull wretchedness out of which finally came more hard, pitiless thinking, which had this time a definitely creative purpose. He had to decide what he was going to do with the thing he had discovered.

As was natural in a man of his sort. he blamed no one, once the first rush of anger had passed. He saw only his own insufficiency and the manner in which Lanin had given to Margaret the elements which he could never have supplied. Those unplumbed depths between them, whose discovery had so startled him, those vast regions of the things beneath the surface—it was there that Lanin's livelier imagination and readier tongue were at their best. Lanin had accustomed Margaret to adventures in a land whose faint paths were all too dim for Danforth's heavier tread. It was no wonder that she had found him dull by comparison.

He had no doubts of what had hap-

pened during his absence.

With a deliberate effort of the will he kept his brain from building detailed pictures. Instead, he grappled with his problem as he did with those which confronted him every day—squarely, unimaginatively, thoroughly. There were several possible solutions; he went over each one of them with painstaking minuteness. He considered gravely the consequences to each of the three people involved.

Finally he made up his mind, but it had taken him a year to reach the decision. During that time he had answered Margaret's letters and the rare ones from Lanin as though nothing had happened. But when in April he was wounded for the second time, he did not go to England, although he might

have done so.

. . . After a time, Danforth became drowsy with watching the fly on the ceiling, and fell into a restless doze. He was vaguely aware of movements and voices in the room, but the coming and going of helpless figures on stretchers had become so familiar that he paid it little attention. But when he awoke, he was conscious that another of those still figures occupied the cot next his, which had been empty when he closed his eyes. He rolled over onto his side

and found himself staring into Lanin's face.

For an instant the two men stared at each other in silence. Danforth was the first to speak.

"What are you doing here, Bob?" he demanded, his mind obeying the new tendency to leap over unessentials.

Lanin made a gesture with one arm. "What else?" he countered.

"How hard are you hit?" Lanin hesitated an instant.

"I'm not likely to die, if that's what

you mean," he said finally.

Danforth nodded. That point settled, he returned to his original difficulty.

"But I don't understand why you're here," he persisted in a puzzled tone. "I've had no word of it. And anyhow, you wouldn't have come!"

Lanin shifted his position slightly so that he could get a squarer look at the other's face. He seemed to be searching Danforth's features for something, and apparently he found it, for into his own face there came a look of relief.

"I had to come," he said. "I've been

here a month."

"Had to?" repeated Danforth.

"Of course," Lanin said wearily.

"Margaret made me."

Danforth's only reply was a slight movement and a tightening of the jaw muscles in the lean cheeks. Lanin smiled as a man does who knows himself in the possession of superior knowl-

"Paul," he said, "you and I aren't going to present the absurd spectacle of a couple of men quibbling and fencing in the face of death, are we? You know that I stayed in England because I loved your wife and she cared for

me."

"Oh, yes, I know that," answered

Danforth.

"I wonder how long you've known!" speculated Lanin. Then, as he saw Danforth hesitate, he broke out, "Oh, let's have it all out! I lied to you just now. This infernal bullet went through my body as well as my arm. I've got perhaps two hours."

Danforth raised himself on one elbow and swore with a violence which seemed horrible under the circum-

"But that isn't right!" he cried. "There was no need for you to die."

"You mean that, don't you, Paul?" Lanin said slowly. "So that was the way out you had found, was it? Yes, you would do that. You would have gone back home and pretended to see nothing, and let matters go on just as they were. And my being snuffed out complicates everything—is that it? It means that you and Margaret will have to face the ugliness after

"I don't see how you know," Dan-

forth said wonderingly.

"Of course you don't!" Lanin answered quickly. "You have been blind to a great many things. You would go on being blind to more if I didn't prevent it. If you had been a different sort of a man, Margaret and I would probably be in America by this time. We should probably have bolted if you had stayed at home. But you went marching away like a Galahad, and there was an end of it!"

"But last October-" began Dan-

forth.

"Last October," Lanin cut in, "is quite another matter from to-day. Last October Margaret and I were still eating of the forbidden fruit. It was still a splendid adventure. We were doing the things which had been impossible, getting a first chance to look at each other squarely and without restraint.

"Then you came home—the same honest, straightforward, lovable son of generations of English squires, with no more subtlety of brain than one of your hulking Herefords! But there was the tan of the trenches on your cheeks, and that honorable hole in your leg, and about you something fine and simple and youthful which I couldn't acquire in a million years! And down came our castle of romance like the flimsiest house of cards!

"There were you, a lean, tanned hero, wounded fighting your country's battles, while I skulked at home making love to your wife. Do you think Margaret and I could remain blind to the horrible contrast between you and me? Knowledge of it had been growing in our minds from the first. There came a day when it became insupportable. I should have come out anyway in an attempt to save my own self-respect if I hadn't come in time to make her think she was forcing me and so saving her own."

"But all that changes nothing!" pro-

tested Danforth.

"You great blockhead, it changes everything!" cried Lanin. "Don't you understand that all this has shown Margaret the different fibre of the two of us as nothing else could have done? That the little flare of excitement over me has been blotted out in a wonderful

flood of love for you that moved me even when I tried to stop it? And don't you see that all three of us deserve exactly what we've got?"

Danforth remained silent. Lanin

stretched out one hand.

"Things are happening inside me," he said faintly. "I have an idea I'm going rather fast. I'm glad you're here, Paul."

Danforth seized the outstretched

hand.

"Bob!" he said.

It was twenty minutes later when the surgeon came in, took one look at Lanin and then turned inquiringly to Danforth.

"Not one of your men, Captain?" he

asked.

"No," answered Danforth, "but he was the best friend I had."



THAT DAY YOU CAME

By David Morton

THAT day you came,—before I saw your face There was a prescience in the trembling air, A keening sense of wonder on the place,— And then I turned and saw you standing there. Voices and faces faded from the room, Dim and unreal as persons in a dream; We two alone stood in a vasty gloom, I as a watcher—you, a swaying gleam.

Beloved, need I tell you that to-day,
No less than on that first exultant night,
Hearing you stir, seeing you stand and sway,
Your loveliness still blinds me with its might . .
An opening door—your step upon the stair,
And a swift wonder thrills along the air.



WHEN a woman has been married a few years she thinks all men are interesting, except her husband.

THE INTERMENT

By John H. Neville

ROM the train, Ezra Hull went directly to the Surf Hotel and inquired for young Mr. Wilton. The clerk critically considered the old man, the shaggy head of snow-white hair and the broad, stooped shoulders beneath the carefully kept suit of faded blue, before he admitted that he did not know just where Wilton might be found at that hour. In his own good time, however, he unbent further to suggest that one might try the Beach, perhaps more profitably to the south, toward Rib Rocks.

Mr. Hull had no difficulty in finding the curiously shaped group of rocks, but saw nothing of Wilton until, having gone some distance beyond and returning, he sat down for a moment's rest on one of the rugged seats and began to look about him. Here and there, even thus far removed from the crowds which thronged the beach nearer the hotels, he saw a dozen or more couples sprawled out in the warm sand, idling away the hour in oblivious intimacy—a man and a woman, a youth and a girl, always the combination. And Hull

smiled indulgently.

He had about decided that he was the only exception to the rule of two, when he noticed seated among the rocks a few yards away a tall, well-dressed, fine-looking man in gray. He might have been fifty or thirty-five; the face was young and strong, yet time had begun to frost the hair at the temples, giving him an appearance of distinction. Hull had noticed the man on the train, and for an instant considered taking advantage of this slight bond of common interest to join the stranger. Something in the other's stern aloof-

ness and cool dignity held him back, and his eyes returned to the scattered

couples on the beach.

Almost immediately, Hull discovered another lone figure, that of a beautiful woman, seated under the shade of a parasol. With a start, he recognized her as Mrs. Ainsworth, of their parish, who sometimes gave liberal sums of money, and occasionally attended service. Wilton had not mentioned in his letters that Mrs. Ainsworth was here at the Beach, where he was spending his vacation. Mr. Hull did not entirely approve of the lovely parishioner. It was possible, in the crowd, that Wilton had not met her.

That hope was dispelled, a moment later, when he saw a young man approach with eager, hurrying strides.

It was young Wilton.

With a soft cry of pleasure, Hull sprang to his feet and had taken a step toward them, when he saw the young man drop quickly to his knee beside the woman and seize one of her hands in both of his. Laughingly, she avoided him, then swung the parasol around as a screen from the others on the beach.

Bewildered and very much embarrassed, Ezra Hull retreated to his position among the rocks. Furtively he glanced at his neighbor to see if his move had been noticed. The man in gray sat motionless, his elbows on his knees, and his hat drawn well down over his eyes. Idly he flicked the sand at his feet with the frail willow cane which he carried. Apparently he had seen nothing.

Then came the thought that the young rascal, with rather indiscreet im-

petuosity, it is to be admitted, was after that subscription for the new parishhouse which he had vowed to get from the wealthy Mrs. Ainsworth, and Mr. Hull's composure returned somewhat. He even smiled benevolently, yet, as he watched the pair, his expression slowly changed from one of benediction to questioning, and finally to apprehension.

Young Wilton seemed to do most of the talking and frequently bent over his companion, as though earnestly pleading with her. For the most part she built little mountains of sand, brushed them aside, and began over again. From time to time, she flashed a glance up into his face, dropped her eyes, and

laughed.

Again and again, Mr. Hull's eyes surreptitiously turned to the man in gray, but never could he discover that the stranger paid the slightest attention to the couple on the beach. It occurred to Hull that the other's position among the rocks hid the scene from him, for when his steady scowl lifted a moment it shifted to the sea and the waves that came racing up over the sand.

Here and there the incoming tide drove back a laughing couple up the beach. Little by little, it crept toward Wilton and the woman. In another minute they, too, would be forced to leave

Then Hull saw Wilton seize the woman's hands, as though to stop their everlasting mountain building and force her attention. Slowly she lifted her eyes until they squarely met his. For an instant he stared into them, then in his turn he laughed aloud and sprang to his feet. She did not join him immediately, and he stood watching as she went on modeling in the sand. Slowly the smile faded from Wilton's face. Suddenly he knelt beside her and contributed something to what she had created. They both sprang up, both looked back on what they had wrought; then he caught her by the arm and hurried her away.

Hull got to his feet and followed.

When he came to where they had lain in the sand he paused. At first he saw nothing, then, with a low cry, he dropped to his knees. What lay before him was the work of a child, conceived with the infernal ingenuity of a mature mind.

The space of a few inches had been patted smooth; in its center was a tiny mound, shaped like a grave. At its head stood a small gold cross, such as a religious man might wear as watch charm. Many times before, Hull had seen it; first, when it had been his own gift to a boy entering the service of the church.

For an instant he stared at it, then he began brushing aside the little mound. In the shallow depths beneath lay a plain gold band, a woman's wedding ring. He reached to pick it up, when a smart rap of a little willow cane across the knuckles caused him to snatch back his hand and spring to his feet.

Before him, his face deathly white, his lips drawn in a hard line, and his eyes flashing dangerously, stood the man in gray. As Hull retreated a step, the man strode forward, planted his heel squarely on the open grave and ground its golden head-mark and contents beneath his weight.

"Do these things in any way concern

you?" he asked coldly.

For a long moment, Hull stood rubbing the fingers of his right hand, and stared at the other. The water of the rising tide already was lapping at their feet. An extra large wave caused the man in gray to step aside and swept over the spot where he had stood, leaving not a trace even of his heel mark. Fascinated, Hull stared at the place; then his eyes again met those of the other man.

"The young curate—the lad was like

my own son."

The man in gray studied him thoughtfully; slowly he lifted his hat from his head and held it respectfully.

"Then I sincerely beg your pardon, sir; I trust I did you no serious injury."

Mr. Hull shook his head dully. "His letters troubled me. I came to—"

"You also, evidently came too late," the man cut in grimly. His manner softened; he came a step nearer. "I should like to know you, sir. I fancy you will find yourself alone to-night; you will honor me and do me a great service by becoming my guest for the evening."

Mr. Hull looked deep into the cold, tired eyes of the man before him. Something in their expression seemed to reach out to him, like a hand through the window of a stone wall.

"I will, sir, and I thank you. My

name's Hull."

The man in gray gently took the injured hand held out to him.

"Rather, I thank you," he said gravely. "My name is Ainsworth."



THE HOUSE ACROSS THE WAY

By Henry Trask

THE house across the way was a house of mystery. No woman visited it in our little town. Women spoke of it only among themselves, and men smirked significantly when it was mentioned. It was tabooed in polite society. Somewhere, it was whispered, the woman who lived in it had done the unforgivable thing—

she had made money by being a woman.

She was all through with it—that much was certain. She lived alone with a single servant. She made no advances, but she was kind to the little children of the poor. She was a proud woman with a grand air. She kept her poise, and she looked sometimes as though she fed on dreams. I think she hated life for betraying her. I do not think that she hated us. But I have thought that she must have pitied us for our provincialism. I think that she endured us as penance for her soul.

But to-day she is dead. It is all over. She is to be buried quietly. In death she is as unobtrusive as in life. I wonder if she will go to Hell? I do not think she will. I think that our little town has been Hell enough.



POEM OF NATURE

By Sarsfield Young

A SQUIRREL ran along the wall. That's all.



CONSECRATION By J. M. Batchelor

AS one fair taper's sacramental light
Hallows the darkness for a little space,
So shines within my soul's close-shrouding night
The loveliness of thy remembered face.

THE WIFE

By Anna Bird Stewart

THE letters were in a small locked box inside the locked drawer of the desk. This hour, alone and free from interruptions, which she had planned so carefully, was now hers.

The drawer unlocked, she held the box in her hand. Yet she felt a strange nerveless hesitation about going further. Then she pulled herself together and forced her hands to action. With a sharp intake of breath, she fitted the key carefully and opened the box. When she came to the packet for which she was looking, which without knowledge she had felt sure that she would find among those papers, she laid the box back upon the desk.

She untied the string from around the letters and wound it over her fingers idly before she looked at them. After her long wondering, the answer to which she held there in her hand, she could not account for the sudden distaste to have her questions

ended.

With a real effort, her nervous fingers sorted the letters, and she began to read.

The first was dated three years before. The last had been written barely two weeks. . . .

I

I am writing to you this morning because . . . I don't know why I am writing. I only know that I ought not, and that I cannot help it. It is small wonder that I feel gratitude and more. You have done so much for me in the straightening out of my tangled business affairs, about which I know

so pitifully little. You have made me braver, and have given me my first desire to live since the death of my mother seemed to stop everything in the world.

From the moment that you took my hand last night, I knew that you had found out what I had known for a long time . . . and had prayed that you might never discover. I felt at the same time that you cared, too. It has made me utterly happy and profoundly miserable.

This is the end. And it has come before even a dream began. I have lain awake all night trying to find a

light, but there is none.

We can see each other no more. That much is sure. One of your assistants can look after my affairs. I am bidding you good-bye now, this way, for I am too much of a coward to trust myself to see you again.

But since this is the last word, and since you know already, and since the telling may ease for me the hurt of parting, I want to tell you once that

I love you.

I love you, and good-bye.

II

Our sudden meeting last night, which you called "a divine accident," is to me the knell of doom. Forgive me if I speak plainly. I do not mean to hurt you needlessly, but we must face facts as they are. In spite of all I could guess from the things you did not say last night, yet still I cannot but know that you still belong in a measure to her. You may not feel it, but I am sure she does. For all that I can imag-

ine of your years of domestic unhappiness, your mutual antagonism, your utter aloofness and impersonal relations, there would be in the feeling of a woman a sense of possession stronger than any bond. Besides, dear, sudden though the revelation may have been to you, I have known for a long time what it means to love you, and I cannot conceive of any woman who had at one time known your love, ever, ever, ever being willing to give you up. You say that what has happened between you two has made you free. I can only think of her, of what it would mean to me, were I in her position.

It is not that I begrudge you the kiss I gave you last night, or that I would wish to barter with you for a name and a ring which you cannot give me. The expediency of material things, as I am well aware, forces you to keep up the outward appearance of domesticity. It is not that, but my knowledge of woman's heart—hers no less than my own—which makes me turn from all that I long for. I cannot take what would not be mine, what is not yours

to give.

Yet if you knew how your kiss thrilled me! And how its memory has made me blush with shame.

Ш

Dear,

What can I say? My weakness is my humiliation. After all I have said and all I have written of our mutual danger, it was I who rushed into the midst of it yesterday. I had told you we could never touch each other again. I had meant never to see you alone. But vesterday when you came to bring for my signature the final papers transferring my affairs, I swear that I did not realize what I was doing. I put my lips up for your kiss as unthinkingly as a child might, or a flower does to the sun. I have proven my untrustworthiness, I who should have been on my guard against my love and yours. Promise me, dear, that from now on you will keep me away from you. I have no more faith in my own promises.

My Sweetheart,

You are right. It is fate. If we are destined for each other, what are my feeble efforts or my prayers to keep us apart?

Yet I shall fight as long as my

strength lasts.

IV

Your telegram was very strange, but as you see, I obeyed it at once, and came up, as you suggested, to the mountains. And here I am waiting for your promised letter, and wondering a little why you should have asked me to leave you just now. I know you must have had a serious reason, and I trust you so much that I came. It is so seldom that you ask anything of me that I am proud when the chance comes. If you were only a woman you might understand the joy I feel in obeying my lord's commands.

The country is lovely, but like all things that touch my eye and my heart, it means you to me, I am a wee bit

lonely.

Even when I cannot see you, it helps to know that you are close enough for me to hear your voice if I needed to call you.

Good night, my dear one.

V

My darling,

Your letter has just reached me. In three days you will be with me. I cannot write. I can only dream, and hope, and fear. I hope that you can stay long enough to take a real rest. The country is at its best to greet you. We can have long rambles up the mountains, and down to the queer little village with the post office and the general store.

The air is wine. Already it tingles with the thought of you. I am so glad, so glad that as you say, you "cannot stay away."

Until I see you!

VI

The whole world is singing to me I love you and you love me. There is a new light on the mountain-tops and I see more beauty than I used to dream. Even though you have gone, I am not lonely. I shall never be anything but happy again. The very longing that I feel to see you, you who have only just—left me, makes me happier in the joy of anticipating your return.

What a world it is—your world, and

mine!

VII

In the last few months we have changed places. Now you are the one who is fearful and in doubt. I know now that you asked me to leave town so that you would be able to think clearly without the mad, wonderful realization of our nearness to each other. I know the feeling of defeat you had when something stronger than you or I made you come to me here. I know the struggle that is going on within you now, because of me. You dropped a hint of it the last time we were together. You feel that our love is a detriment to me, is in some way holding me back. Please do not think of it so.

Our love is no tragedy—it has made me so happy, so grateful. Its sole element of tragedy is that I refute my own purpose. What I want above all things is for you to be happy, which is not unselfishness, but because I know that this is the way I'd be happiest. Why should you let idle generalities bother you? You have made me saner, more wholesome and happier. You have brought out the very best that is in me, and because of you, I would be a wiser mother, even a better wife. Look once at the other side of the question, and you will see what a blank my life would be were it not for you.

VIII

How little a man can understand a

woman's feelings. You must not blame yourself because the forces of life and love are stronger than we. Is the whole world wrong because one woman is happy and holds the man she loves within the two arms of her spirit?

I would not change places with any person on earth unless I could have been your mother, able to look at you and say proudly, "He is my son." I would not exchange the sense of companionship, of utter love and trust which we have had, for any other possible thing in the world. If it should all end now, and we should never see each other again, I would not change the knowledge and the memory for anything else that was still continuous.

If you were a woman you would understand why I say that in giving me yourself you have made me worth more to my own self. You are my world and my God,—which is what every woman feels when she loves. It is a reflection of that feeling which the Church attributed to the Virgin. And without sacrilege but with supreme reverence I say that the Holy Ghost must be in the spirit which we feel within and around us when we love.

It is a terrible thing to be a woman, an unutterable responsibility, but when one has measured the heights and sounded the depths, as some of us do, the mere privilege of being what we are

is enough to have lived for.

IX

I am coming back.

I am going to stay near you. You must have someone to whom you can talk, to whom the petty worries can be told and so forgotten. From now on my life is yours, to do with as you wish. And my home will be your refuge. When you need me I shall never again be far away. I can never forget what you called me—the wife of your spirit. The name-wives who are not also wives of the spirit are the ones to be pitied.

I am coming back to you.

X

It has been three years to-night since you first kissed me. I wonder why women remember dates and foolish little things that mean so much to them, and so little to a man?

There is a sense of tragedy in the air to-night. I know that something important must have kept you away. But I want you to know once more how happy you have made me during these

three years.

I am what they call the other woman. I wonder what some women would give to have scaled the heights as I have, to have reached the clouds, to have taken thence such dreams as now live in my heart—the only things in the world that do not fade!

. . . She looked up from the last letter slowly and sat quiet, thinking. Around her was luxury, an exquisite setting which fitted her beauty. It evidenced taste, care and money—unlimited money, the money of the man whose name she bore, who had greeted her during the past five years with a flawless, impersonal courtesy in the presence of her guests, on the rare occasions when he saw her.

"The other woman," she quoted to herself, looking down at the letters in

her lap.

She had known that there must be another woman, she had felt that. But this was the first proof, these letters dated over a period of three years, and written to the man whose widow she had been for the last five days.

She wondered, in that curiously cold, aloof way she always had, what she

might have done had she found the packet of letters before that sudder accident had brought death on the very crest of life. She knew that however little her husband had grown to care for her, she had always retained the power to hurt him. Would she have used it?

There was no resentment in her

now, only a sort of wonder.

She looked around the room with the merciless gaze of an appraiser, her eyes dwelling on each of the priceless units of a perfect whole. She felt again the keen joy of appreciation, the thrill

of possession.

There was a murmur of voices from the hall outside, a subdued shriek of joy from a child, the clang of a closing door. Through the window she could see the two children going out for their afternoon walk with their governess. The young French woman was between them, holding a hand of each. She and the little girl were laughing merrily at some remark the boy had made.

His children.

As she watched them her mind flew back to the early years of her married life. Had the change that came over them been as inevitable as she had always fancied? Had she lived their life together, or her own life?

All that the world values he had given her,—his name, his position, his wealth, his children. What had she

given in return?

Her eyes came back from the window to the letters in her lap. She felt the chill of envy within her.

"The other woman," she repeated. "No, she was wrong. I am the other woman."



THE virtuous hold preferred stock, but they have to get used to deferred dividends.



MEMORY ON A SPREE

By Max Saher

TWO years had fled. Kathleen was no longer the wilful, turbulent, often reckless, woman who lived through the stimulation of successive love affairs.

It was all, in a practical way, twilight with her now, pale and dull, with the past growing indistinct, and Kathleen had never loved the twilight. Quick transition from day to night—the first shadow and all the lights on. Only poets really love the twilight, they to whom renunciation and loss make music in the soul. And Kathleen was not a poet, but a woman, rather, of action, who had the power to illumine others through her vital force and the fierce passions that translated them and herself into realms outside the pale of the ordinary. Humanity was good enough for her, she often said, and by humanity, it might be assumed, Kathleen meant the male half of it.

Kathleen could count many ardent lovers in retrospect, those who had touched her fancy, her senses, even her sense of humor, for she could laugh at

men as well as enchant them.

But there was only one who had ever aroused her imagination, touched to life whatever heart or soul she possessed. Save for this one, a youth, there was no bitterness in her memories. Her lightly considered love affairs merely represented enlivening, pleasant or disturbing—disturbing the monotony of things—experiences.

And how fast and furiously adorers had come to her feet! Sometimes Kathleen would laugh at the thought of them, those men so easily drawn by her splendor—everyone always spoke

of her wonderful figure, her wavy dark hair, with its burnt tinge that made it the color of rich chocolate, and her laughing, insolent brown eyes that flashed their passion through short, thick black lashes. She played them in a splendid fashion, with a kind of halfexpressed contempt that they liked as men ever like the fire and scorn of a woman. They were never sacred in her eyes, or worthy of any reverence. So little impression, indeed, had her experiences made upon her that sometimes she would wonder why the memories of certain beings with whom she had been so intimate for weeks, or months, sometimes even a year or so, should be so indistinct. Why, she would inwardly remark at times, she could scarcely remember them, and would actually strive to do so. There are women like that. women to whom memories of men come up but vaguely, like half-forgotten schoolhood days-both just part of a vanished life.

Yes, the brilliant days lay behind Kathleen. A husband, a partly indifferent one, who had been compelled to put up with much, and who, in spite of her discontent and prodding, had never, to Kathleen's disgust, arrived from the financial standpoint. Just great big Jim, plodding along on his four or five thousand a year and always looking for a "raise." Latterly neither had made much impression upon the other's life. Kathleen kept a spotless house and a good table, and Jim held up his end of the line in his own clumsy way the best he could, with payments on the new car-a necessity Kathleen — weighing upon him. Sometimes Kathleen experienced a little shudder at the idea of this man, so altogether familiar to her-a crime in Kathleen's sight-to whom she was quite indifferent, serving as a lover. . . .

In these moments her mind would fly back, and she would attempt to recall the past when there was always a "new" man, but with the years this grew more difficult, so that it seemed to her at times the only satisfaction left in life was seeing that the silver shone or that the cloth was spotless, or that no dust gathered in the corners on the highly polished hardwood floors.

Also, there was, in spite of the humdrum tenor that life had incomprehensively assumed—half poverty, Kathleen said, the cause was-no diminution in her desire to appear "stunning," to maintain her reputation for her "wonderful figure," to appear—and this was what Kathleen had ever considered herself-resplendent! And so much of her time was given to keeping her wardrobe in perfect order, and not unsuccessfully, for her fingers, in spite of their suggestion of blunt ends, were skillful. She could fashion things.

One day she happened to be retrimming a hat, a rather old one, but as the process was not wholly unsuccessful, a little excitement — such women as Kathleen thrill easily to accomplishment, even though it be to the yielding of an old hat to the touch-had flushed her cheeks, and the "lit up" look, the ghost of the look that used to be hers when some man was yielding to her glance, was upon her. Seated on an ottoman with an empty hatbox on one side of her, and her neat work-basket on the other, she held the hat up and then down, then to one side, and then high up over her head. She was not, and that could plainly have been read by an onlooker, entirely satisfied; the hat needed something, and suddenly she remembered a certain feather. In a second, with an impulsive bound, she was on her feet.

Kathleen had an old box on an upper shelf that contained such things, old odds and ends, that had been on and off hats for some years. So she sprang to a chair, got the box down, and soon there lay strewn about her odd bits of things, old ribbons, velvets, gilts, buckles, several feathers, and among them the one Kathleen sought.

She took it up eagerly, hesitated, flashed a glance to one side, turned pale, and let it fall with her hands to

her lap.

"Boy!" she breathed, her chin up and her eyes ahead of her gathering sorrow and horror. "Boy!" she repeated.

Kathleen had forgotten the hat she was trimming. . . . She was back in her memory of the one time when her soul had stirred, and her heart had joined hands with her body. .

He had helped her select the hat that old feather had decorated! She wondered, with a bit of hurt feeling about the heart, what had become of the old hat—she should have kept it. . . . How eager he had been about her getting that particular hat! Kathleen's eyes shot forth lights from the pain that attacked her like a poison from head to her feet.

"What an innocent!" she finally said aloud, almost with a tender little smile, "what an innocent!"

And then Kathleen, upon her countenance the strange soul-light that only this youth had ever seen there, was back in London. . . . So vivid for an instant was her memory that she feltherself enveloped in the smoke and gloom, and then as quickly out in the bright sunlight of Hyde Park.

Kathleen tried to remember how long ago it was-how many years-and experienced a little impatience with herself that she never kept count of time. regarding years as days or weeks, periods that just went by. Suddenly even the youth was vague, vague as time. It was all so unreal, so much like a dream, she might never have known him at all. might just be recalling a play that had affected her deeply. But then Kathleen's face grew hard and bitter and she shuddered as though that poison she

first felt was taking deadly effect.
"No, no," she whispered, "it was all too real. You were God's angel, boy, lent the earth a few brief years to show me all the wonders of love!"

She always saw him thus: radiant with joy, herself forgotten, and treading, with that light, buoyant step of his, those streets of gold. . . .

It was love at first sight with this gladsome youth—this innocent. He had come upon her unexpectedly, paused in astonishment at the sight of her, and then, well—it was as though

he went mad. . . .

Kathleen, with her memories clearer now, saw him as she had seen him that first moment of their meeting, hatless, with a tennis racket in his hand, standing thus astonished by her, as though for the first time he beheld a woman. . . . He had told her afterwards it was the first time, that all female creatures before had been to him but shadows. Not one, and he had spoken the truth, had engaged him, his attention; the light weight of a woman's hand had never been laid upon him—he had never known the touch of a woman's lips to his. . . . He was, from the moment his eyes rested upon her, hers, and this he quickly told her, as he had arrived from God.

Kathleen remembered how this confession, made as a proper offering to her, had excited her. She remembered how-they were visiting at some old home on the Thames and had strolled to the garden—she had lifted his fair, silky hair in her fingers, and gazed into the clear, pale, shining eyes, smoothed down the soft cheeks lightly, fixed feverish eyes upon the cleft lips, noted the beauty of his throat, the flat, boyish chest, the slender limbs, the delicately fashioned hands and feet-this perfect youth who had told her in such an impulsive, impassioned way that he was hers straight from God!

Kathleen remembered the kiss she gave him, and how ever after she had called him her wonder boy. . . . "He was that," Kathleen breathed now in ecstasy of remembrance, "my wonder boy!"

"What a beautiful dream!" she exclaimed aloud, "these months were!"

After all, they were the only ones of her whole life that had counted, for they were the only ones when she had lived in the world and been above and not a part of it. Kathleen remembered that during those months she had not -nor had he either-considered the world at all; its comment, and its opinion had counted to them no more than the sands of the desert. . . . What strange places they had visited, and what worldly places, too-Paris, Monte Carlo, and all the rest where people bent upon half-made experiences congregate! . . . How madly they had defied consequences, opinion, comment, each with uplifted head, as it were, owners of the earth, because on fire with love. And what love! It seemed to her in this moment of remembrance that she had always walked ahead, taken the lead, and that he had followed, blinded by her into triumphant transports for them both.

"Boy!" she breathed again, "Boy!" And Kathleen was back in a certain night, a warm, moist night, in an old stone house situated in a garden on the Rhine. . . . Kathleen thought of the beautiful rose trees in this garden, with roses the color of pale gold in large bunches at the top, and the long arbor upon which pink ones bloomed, and that there were many white pigeons, and gravelled walks. . . And then the memory of a song came up, sung in a beautiful tenor voice that on the first night of their arrival had floated to them from a passing boat. Even now the memory of that voice and those plaintive words: "Ich weis nicht was soll es bedeuten-" caused a shiver to

And then suddenly Kathleen thought of the rooms in the old stone house, queer rooms, with white porcelain stoves, and old, massive furniture and carpets with wreaths of roses that she had laughed at and called ugly. . . . She thought of all these things because it had ever seemed to her that here, in this strange, quiet place, their love had reached its height—its high-wrought climax. . . It was here that his

pass over her.

boyish beauty had shone out so radiantly, here all that he possessed had been abandoned to her. . . .

Kathleen was living again those kisses that in their gentle clinging exuded honey that stole through their veins and left them, she now thought, so faint, faint, faint! She smiled as she remembered that on one or two occasions she had, without knowing it, fallen asleep on the terrace, to awake and find that beautiful young face above hers, the still hungry eyes full of patient waiting. . . .

How he had loved! Kathleen remembered how, wandering in the old garden, she had felt light-headed, lost her footing, and how he had caught her thus weak, and forced back her head and added to her enfeeblement by more kisses, always, always kisses, kisses ever new, ever different, ever bewildering. . . . How he had loved!

Oh! for one touch of those lips, oh! for the planting of that bow-shaped mouth upon hers, oh! for a glimpse of those clear eyes with their fierce light burning, oh! for the feel of those slender youthful fingers, to see the buoyant stride that was ever his when approaching her! Oh! for the hurry of him, the impatience, the jealous flash of his eyes if hers wandered even to the most lowly; his constant demand, his continuous prayers for more and more and more kisses! Ah! how he had loved!

The telephone rang and a shudder that was like a spasm passed over Kathleen. But she made no movement. It rang and rang and she sat perfectly still, waiting for it to be over. Finally silence was re-established. . . . Kathleen clasped her hands and seemed to peer into the beyond. . . . "Boy," she breathed, "Boy!"

Later Kathleen heard her husband's step in the hall and still with her eyes

fixed ahead of her reached over, as wives will to cover their tracks, and took up the hat she had been at work upon.

Entering with his abrupt manner he inquired with less than his usual indifference—he rather peered at her—"What are you doing?"

She looked at him defiantly as though he represented all that she found detestable.

"Trimming an old hat," she said

calmly, "to save expense."

"The operation appears to have been a trying one—better get another. You look like a ghost!"

"Do I?" she inquired a bit plaintively.
"Yes, and I feel as hungry as a bear!
Have dinner, will you?"

"Yes, I will, Jim!"

When the door closed she appeared to forget him. . . After a moment she took up the old feather and sat gazing at it until her lips quivered.

"Boy," she breathed finally, and slipping to the floor she lay flat upon it, face down, with the old feather crushed to her breast. . . .

On the steps half an hour later, when she descended, Kathleen paused suddenly and snapped her fingers. She had intended to have the silver cleaned today!

When she entered the dining-room, however, everything looked bright enough, and Jim, as opposed to his usual custom, had made some cocktails and a glass stood by her plate and his. Jim had been quite patient about waiting for dinner, too. She must have looked pretty bad, Kathleen thought, when he came upon her.

She took her seat and fixed upon him a sex glance, half flirtatious, as she tilted her head.

"Here's to us, Jim," she said, lifting her glass, "and the—raise!"



THE REMLEYS' SECOND MARRIAGE

By Evelyn Campbell

Y/HEN the young pair were divorced, Sarah had behaved in a way to shock and tantalize most of their friends and please a few of them. For with unexpected modernity she had insisted on reclaiming her spinster name, calling herself Sarah Dean with insouciant impudence, and having accomplished this regeneration, further refused flatly to accept a penny from Barre or his family. This was considered Quixotic of her, for if Barre had little his people had a great deal, and they had disliked Sarah exceedingly. It would have been cunning in her to have made them pay up. But as she did nothing of the kind and haughtily scorned all talk of allowances, it was natural that she got herself talked about to some extent, for everyone was compelled to wonder how she expected to live, knowing of course that she was an orphan with hardly a sou of her own.

Barre took this alimonyless condition rather hard. He was ashamed and humiliated to think of Sarah without new frocks and pretty belongings — otherwise he was very glad to be rid of her. They were both too young to be married and had quarrelled lamentably during their gay, brief time together. But they had nothing especially hateful to say of each other, only that they were incompatible; a word that covers a large part of Webster's Unabridged.

By the time Sarah had returned from her lengthy sojourn with an aunt in Missouri or Colorado, where the little difficulty had been adjusted, nearly everybody had forgotten that she had ever been anything but Sarah Dean. The little scandal had quickly died, for there was nothing to keep it alive. They had been a perfectly proper young pair, merely grown tired of an episode in love.

The year's absence had made a great change in Sarah, and as time passed she altered to such an extent that Barre himself often paused irresolute at his rare encounters with her, before he hazarded a greeting. She had been a pretty, petulant girl of a somewhat tiresome variety; divorce made of her one of those svelte, enchanting mysteries, living in charming semi-seclusion and no visible bank account. In five years she had learned how to smile, had trained her hair properly and knew exactly how to look at a man and listen.

She had a great many friends, all smart and interesting, and she herself appeared to be the little hub around which her universe revolved. In seven years she had attained contentment.

And during this interval Barre had not remained at a standstill. The irksomeness of Sarah's girlishness removed, he fell to his man's work with the avidity of a hungry young soul. He could not find enough labor to quiet him. His brief spasm of matrimony had surfeited him with love and for a time he looked upon women with a repellant eye. It was a foregone conclusion that he should prosper and this amazingly, so that long before Sarah had reached her lonely pinnacle, he was able to buy strings of pearls and limousines, and to hire a perfectly competent manager to attend to his affairs.

So for awhile these ex-honeymooners saw nothing of each other, for Barre, recovering from his love surfeit upon the acquisition of leisure was led far afield of any chance meeting with Sarah Dean.

She used to hear of his goings on and sigh softly to herself, for though she had willingly divorced her body from his, the mind is a stubborn thing and she had never been able to conquer a subconscious interest in his neckwear and the use he made of his latchkey.

"Poor old dear," she would muse, sympathetically, "he's restless, don't know what to do—with all that money. How I wish he would settle down

peaceably."

There was a certain Mrs. Berthe Orkney, not too proud to retain name and alimony, upon whom Sarah played rather a mean trick at this phase. Poor Mrs. Orkney, having reached Sarah's circle by degrees, had not the faintest notion that her engaging friend had ever been other than a demoiselle. She was a beautiful, brainless little ninny, so fond of talking about herself that she confided the minute details of her affair with Barre Remley without noticing anything remarkable about the confidant's reception of it all. who could blame Sarah for listening? It was one of the things she had learned to do so gracefully, and it was also the way she kept up with Barre's little habits.

She had removed herself from him so utterly that she would have been embarrassed at the necessity of proclaiming a previous, and at least equal, knowledge of him to unsuspecting Mrs. Orkney. She preferred that someone else should disclose the truth, as would inevitably happen, and meekly remained quiet and receptive.

It was in the following summer that chance threw her with Barre for a few weeks and their friends, those who had forgotten them and those who still cared, were electrified by the news of

their sudden remarriage.

II

Just how much Mrs. Orkney's revelations may have had to do with this,

Sarah would not admit, even to herself. She knew that for a great while she had been possessed of a wistful longing to see Barre again, and that in the hour of their meeting, their eyes had dwelt restfully upon each other. Sarah, who had discarded sentiment with blue ribbons, fell into mature dreamings of peaceful home-coming.

They themselves knew less how it

came about than anyone else.

They were only conscious that they were intoxicatingly in love, and for the moment that was sufficient. Barre, perhaps, was most reckless in his new devotion. He seemed to have leapt backward ten years into the springtime of their lives, and in some way to have resurrected the orange blossoms which had faded on her bridal veil. He would not admit that Sarah had been otherwise than his from the beginning.

But she, more sane, reviewed his attitude with some doubt and a tender indulgence. She had had a great deal of love in her life, but none had pleased her quite as Barre's. This was because she was fundamentally an ascetic woman, and had worn through the years of her widowhood the faint mark of a yoke upon her white neck. She had tried as lucidly as she might to insist upon a complete readjustment of their early errors. She was so certain where they had failed and so determined that they should avoid the same pitfalls. Summoning the tragedy into one word, she sadly named their old-time mistakes "intolerance," and Barre agreed with everything she said, though when he was kissing her hands he barely heard half.

So it was resolved, mainly by Sarah, that their second married life should begin on quite a new basis. There were to be no tormenting retrospections, no boresome reproaches. They were man and woman now, no longer boy and girl. Poor Sarah, in her desire to perpetuate the theories she had laboriously acquired in ten years of vicarious freedom, even went to the extent of freely and actually forgiving all of Barre's lapses during that time.

"For unless," she reasoned with herself, "I can eradicate any feeling of jealousy for this period of his life, it is certain that we will quickly drift back to the old ways, narrow, temperish, intolerant."

So honest was she in these resolutions that, when six months after their remarriage, the beautiful Mrs. Orkney drifted back into their orbit, Sarah conscientiously erased from her mind the written page of Berthe's confessions. She smiled when Barre rather blankly asked why the two women had nevermentioned each other to him.

"My dear," she said placidly, "at the time you were knowing Mrs. Orkney, I did not exist for you. Why should I question your possible infidel-

ity to a stranger?"

Barre's blank stare became blanker. "Oh, but by Jove," he exclaimed, "do you mean you don't give a rap about me and little Berthe—that you wouldn't be jealous if she were about, and so on?"

His experience with women had not led him to expect any such phenomenon, but Sarah merely nodded her perfect coiffure.

"I mean that I am merely concerned with our present and future," she corrected gently. "The past is done—I hope."

The last was merely a sop to eternal womanhood, but Barre interpreted it

differently.

He wondered, bewildered for the moment, if his Sarah had imbibed fancies about free love during their years of separation. He was embarrassed by the absence of spitefulness in her attitude towards his past. He could not reconcile it with his remembrance of her at twenty, and because he did not understand he became vaguely suspicious. Her views were touched with masculinism.

Berthe Orkney, when she had recovered from the shock of finding her friend married to her one-time lover, accepted them philosophically and became an intimate of their ménage. Barre, piqued at what he termed Sarah's

indifference, was more than less attentive to the pretty leaf from his closed book, and Sarah, herself, looked on with surprisingly cool emotion at the resurrected friendship.

"I must be tolerant," she continued to whisper to herself, and found it quite

easy.

TTT

THE truth was that the second marriage with the same husband had not quite come up to Sarah's expectations. She often asked herself why she had done this thing; Barre would have made such an agreeable friend. All too soon the excitement of once more having him for a husband had palled. There were many times when she sorely missed her dusky little apartment with the shaded yellow lamp, so she began to gather her old-time circle about her in an effort to revive contentment. She had found that Barre's taste in neckties was much the same as another man's, and his punctuality with the latchkey had become more than monotonous.

But poor Sarah was to discover that those who have burned their bridges may not return over them; the road that had taken ten years of her life to cover was no longer hers to follow. The peace she sought perpetually evaded, for with her own hands she had destroyed every hope for it. Barre, incensed by her compliance in the Orkney affair, became tragically in love with her, that is, jealously, despotically, unpleasantly, in love.

Before long he was asking himself questions and coining answers for them.

He argued. If a woman is not jealous of her husband it is because she no longer cares. If she is willing for him to resume tender passages with an old love, it is because she craves the same privilege, and so on, ad infinitum.

One day he asked her: "Sarah, who is that fellow Hapgood, who is here so often?"

"Vance Hapgood?" she repeated the name stupidly and to her own annoyance blushed deeply. "One of my oldest friends, Barre. I should not try to do without him."

To her amazement and disgust he answered violently. "But you will have to do without him. I don't like him. My wife can't have friends who look at her as that man looks at you."

Sarah added contempt to the array of her feelings and let it be known, so for a time Barre was so ashamed of his outburst that he controlled his emotions rigorously. But this repression only served to multiply them, and she, more intuitive than the majority of her kind, quickly learned to read the gnawing doubt in his eyes and behind his closed lips. She was even glad when at last the situation reached a focus. It was brought about by the unromantic agency of the monthly cheque for household expenditure.

Barre always enjoyed giving her these cheques. It seemed to make up somehow for a void that he would not name, even to himself. To-day's was for an extra large amount, he had made it so purposely, and stood watching her face for some sign of pleasure or ap-

preciation.

But Sarah, distrait, merely twirled the paper in her fingers, frowned absently, and dropped it in her dressing

table drawer.

Then suddenly, the foment of his hidden thoughts became uncontrollable, and he said what had been in his mind, dormant at first, then persistently tormenting, until he gave it utterance.

He stammered: "You have no money of your own! How did you live during

our years apart?"

She heard him with a little shock that quickly turned to pale, seething anger. So this was the question which had so often puzzled her, in his eyes. Not did she love him? Not was she happy? nothing about the future, but a grave-yard inquiry into the dead past. How had she lived? But she was a clever woman and dissembled her anger neatly. She threw back her head and laughed.

"My dear Barre, what a question.

How should I know? Ask my creditors."

He was not satisfied with that, of course, though he relapsed into sulky silence and forebore to weary her with eternal suspicions; but she knew that the respite would not be for long.

For Sarah life was fast becoming a small hell in a rosejar. The money her husband smothered her with, the gifts and the beautiful home became so many goads to her perturbed spirit. In everything there was the sting of contrast, and he lost no opportunity of referring to the old days when she had been without an income.

Never a poor spirit, she endured patiently while she could, and even pitied him at times for the destroying passion he had for her, and which was so mean a love that it could only breathe in the shallows. She was saddened at the approaching death of the sweet thing that had been between them, but she recognized with resignation that her own emotions could not live in the same atmosphere which nurtured the pettiness of his.

They had both meant so well in their second rapture and it had promised so

fair.

Wherein had it failed?

Sarah questioned her heart with a sigh. Could it be that the universal slogan for marital happiness was all wrong? Those who should know had preached tolerance for the watchword and what of it? She had practised and what had come of it? In return for her sweet connivance of Berthe Orkney's eternal coquetry her husband annoyed her with burning questions of what concerned nobody but herself. For Barre had soon ceased to sulk in silence and harassed her waking and sleeping hours with unending delvings into what she wished to forget.

"My dear Barre," she said once, "you do not ask acquaintances you meet at your club how they pay their bills. A great many people live without visible money. Why worry about how I managed during the—er—interval between our affairs. I was merely an ac-

quaintance at that time; why are you interested in my economies?"

But she could not silence him with that

"I want to know," he insisted, but without meeting her eyes, "I can't bear to think that there is a part of your life that I don't understand. Surely you could explain easily if you would!"

Could she?

It seemed to her that anything must be easier than such an explanation. Now that she knew him better than she ever had, she wondered mightily if he would have been satisfied with what she could tell him. Matters reached this issue between them and neither would give

way.

He had become obsessed with the one idea and must know what was written on that turned down page. He regarded each wayfarer from her past with cold appraisement, watching for some sign that this one had been more to her than another. And he was not content with that but descended to persuasion, mock lover-like pleadings, which sought to entrap her to some careless acknowl-

edgment.

It was inevitable that Sarah should grow sick at heart of these things, and when a woman arrives at that, it is all over with love. But she was a woman after all, and burned with indignation at the ravagement of her peace this last year had made. Twice he had laid bare the garden of her heart, leaving her poor little feminine illusions to die of biting cold and neglect. She could have forgiven an Othello madness which would have struck at the suspicion that another man had kissed her hand, but she was merely revolted that he wished to know who had paid her gas bills. She could not be blamed that she sought a retaliation in kind.

When her trunks had all been packed and sent away, she told him that she was going to be plain Sarah Dean again, and listened weariedly to his expostula-

tions and pleadings.

"I've decided that love after thirty ought to be prohibited," she told him. "After that age there's jealousy, selfishness, exacting passion, all the opposites, but never love. I'm going to write a book warning people never to try the same thing twice. I shall put in my book that love to be appreciated should be eaten like a cake, very hot, and forgotten. Remembering things fatal."

"But Sarah," he begged despairingly, knowing that he could not move her, "why should you leave me? We love each other, no matter what you say. I adore you. In spite of all, I adore you. Why have you let this come between us. I am ready to forgive—anything, if you will only tell me. Answer the question I have asked so often and I swear no breath of it shall ever come between us again."

She was leaving the room with no tender good-bye, but she turned at that and answered him, with her slim back

against the door.

"Perhaps it is your readiness to forgive which warns me to be silent," she said. "If at any time during these years you had come to me with an offer of help, you would now know my answer . But you had forgotten me, or at least, seldom thought of me. Berthe Orkney has shown me a string of pearls you hung about her neck-did you wonder at that time about me? If anyone had asked you while you were in love with another woman, you would have replied that I was nothing to you —that I did not even bear your name, and that would have been the truth. Now that I appeal to you once more, you wish me to live over those years vicariously, to suffer again in the repetition, the great agonies, the small triumphs, the sleepless hours and sweat of pain that comes to a woman while she is learning to unlearn the cross that has been laid upon her by the ages—to live alone." Her eyes locked with his in a strange look; he seemed for a moment to glimpse a strange interior filled with shrouded mysteries whose weird shapes might be anything; then he was baffled by the enigmatic smile that swept her features and closed that door forever.

"It is not love that asked that question," she went on, speaking over her shoulder as she stood on the threshold, "it is only the eternal seeking for knowledge that would neither make you happy or miserable, for you do not love me. Twice you have had my life and let it go; your question relates to the

part that belongs to me alone. Because you saw me content you are skeptical of how it was done, how I financed my happiness, and because, dear Barre, I do not wish you to forget me a second time, the answer to that question will remain forever one thing that you will never know."



WAITING

By Lucie Lacoste

YES, I have changed,—I know it.
Even the wind is not always the same,—
Sometimes it blows damp and rainy from the East,—
Sometimes it blows soft and tender from the South.

The sky turns from blue—to gray—to gold.

The sea is calm, it is blue. The sea is rough, it swells to black,—
The sea becomes placid, it subsides to a quiet gray.

Yes, I have changed, I know it.

The bud is too soon the flower, the flower drops its withered petals, one by one, disconsolately, to the ground.

I from a laugh, a laugh of Spring, have changed into a patient wail—a wail of Autumn—
Waiting for you.



FLEURETTE MUST LEAVE

By Jean Hamilton

I SHALL tell Fleurette she must leave. She will fall at the side of my chaise-longue and raise her large eyes imploringly to mine; she will protest; she will flatter me with entrancing French epithets; she will plunge her face into the rug and weep loudly; but I shall insist that she leave. Fleurette forgot to scent the water when she bathed little Fido.

IN WHICH THE HERO AND HEROINE NEVER MEET

By H. S. Haskins

UCINDA PERKINS, on her fortieth birthday, sat on her back porch and knitted. Five miles away, Willis Craig stood aside to let the Overland Limited pass. After the dust settled he swung into his stride, again, his long legs covering two ties at a step.

Lucinda was a spinster by habit and instinct. Craig was a tramp-poet by

inspiration.

At the end of an hour Lucinda and Craig were only a mile apart.

"I wonder what's getting into me?"

said the spinster.

Nature, finding an idle hour and bent on adventure, stimulated Lucinda's pulse. Her cheeks responded with a warm glow. Her eyes became fathoms deep.

"I feel positively sinful," she reflected

and knitted vigorously.

Until she was thirty-five, Lucinda had devoted her life to her parents. Their horizon was hers. Her most enjoyable evenings were spent with her father, a civil war veteran, listening to his reminiscences of campaigns under Grant. This nightly dissipation over, she engaged in the narrowest of small talk with her mother, deploring with her the innovations and artificialities of modern life, condemning, with filial energy, automobiles, airships and other evidences of worldly and scientific supremacy.

Interest in the other sex never ruffled her life, although she was comely, with her fair hair, brown eyes and graceful

figure.

When her parents died, within a month of each other, Lucinda stirred

unsuspected depths by her passionate outbursts of loneliness. As the months passed, these periods of vehement rebellion became less frequent. Gradually, her life returned to the normal.

For five years she lived alone in the comfortable homestead sustained by the admirable income left by her parents. After a struggle, in which loyalty to her mother's old-fashioned prejudices against latter-day luxuries failed to prevail, she had a telephone installed. Outside of that her old habits were unchanged.

To go back to Lucinda's fortieth birthday. Nature found her on the back porch, knitting, and Nature, being on an errand of mischief, crept from behind a tree and stabbed deep with

the knife of desire.

Willis Craig, with his six feet two of superlatively energetic manhood, swung along the railroad track, his earthly possessions done up in a red bandanna at the end of a stick. He glanced across the fields at Lucinda's respectable white house, set in a clump of trees. He was thirsty. He spied a well-sweep, back of the house. Seeing what he wanted he left the track and made for it.

Lucinda did not see him approaching but, curiously enough at that moment, her heart contracted with a sharp pain which caught her breath. Her hair swept downward upon her moist neck in a heavy, golden mass. Her long lashes swept her flushed cheek as she closed her eyes to the image which stirred her. Nature observed results and smiled. Defeated in the greatest

plan of all by this childless woman, Nature was bent upon revenge.

Willis Craig, his fine nostrils distended, drew nearer, his feet noiseless upon the turf.

A longing for what life had not given her seized Lucinda. Her lips trembled for the kisses which had been denied her.

Nature, spying an old acquaintance in Willis Craig, drew his willing eyes to the simply clad woman, sitting with her back toward him; emphasized the seductive droop of the copper hair on the white nape of her neck; revealed the contour of her waist; glorified her graceful pose.

"What a figure!" exclaimed Craig under his breath, for Nature, by a stealthy flank movement, had found a point of vantage and had stabbed him with the knife of desire.

Ten feet separated them.

Nature sat back to gloat. Revenge was all but accomplished for was not Lucinda Perkins, spinster, soon to become Lucinda Perkins, courtesan?

At this point, Science, in the shape of a three-party telephone line, inter-

posed. The bell rang sharply, once, twice—

Lucinda came to her New England senses with a start. Gathering her knitting by lifting her skirt above slender ankles, she ran into the house.

Craig, unseen behind a bush, listened. "Yes, indeed, Mrs. Morris, I will be only too glad to give you Mother's recipé." Then followed a jargon of domestic terms strange to Craig's ears.

"Be sure to stir in the butter before. . . ."

Craig was at the well, drinking deep, luscious draughts of crystal water. With a backward glance at the house he vaulted the fence and was soon out of sight.

Lucinda Perkins, spinster, sat on her back porch and knitted. The current of life again flowed smoothly through the landscape of habit, prim flowers of decency growing to the water's edge.

Nature, with an idle hour uselessly spent, defeated in revenge, followed in disgust Craig's footsteps along the route of the Overland Limited.



THE PHENOMENON

By William Sanford

I HAVE traveled the whole world over many, many times, and I have seen and heard all of the most wonderful things on earth. But there is one thing that is stamped upon my memory and can never leave it. Against the background of all else it stands out as the most truly wonderful.

I once saw a woman pull in a two-inch fish, and she did not scream!



WHEN you see a pretty girl, think of how she will hate you after you get tired loving her.



THE BLOT OF INK

By Count Alexis N. Tolstoi

BRASS lamp hung by a chain from the ceiling immediately over the table. This table was covered with a blue sheet of paper plentifully bespattered with blots and smeared with smudges of ink. The yellow light fell upon a pile of letters and illuminated two knuckly, nimble hands. The left hand would snatch up a letter from the pile, raise it toward a flat and reddish nose, decorated by a brown mole and a silver pince-nez, and then flirt it into the right hand. The right hand would then automatically fling it into one of the pigeonholes of a case which stood beside the table.

This daily and monotonous work was little inclined to overtax the brain of Postmaster Krymsin. Despite this his thoughts found no objective. slumbered in his brain, and only his colorless eyes shot swiftly from side to side. A small samovar hissed and fumed near the edge of the table. An immense drowsy peace pervaded the post office and the two waiting rooms of this little Russian railway station. extended itself over the vast and empty environment of the steppes. Nothing ever happened which could in the least interrupt the postmaster's useful and regular labors.

Krymsin had just seized a small envelope with his left hand and shot it into his right—when the hand that held it began to tremble. He halted in his work, nervously adjusted his eyeglasses, spread his elbows upon the table and read the address upon the envelope.

ALEXANDER PETROVITCH TIMENKOFF, Sosenki Manor.

A spotty redness began to overflow his sunken cheeks. His thin lips, framed in a sparse and feeble growth of beard, warped themselves into a wry smile. He rose, moved toward the bubbling samovar and murmured:

"Poor Lisa! She must be pining for him again. She simply can't get along without this sweetheart of hers. Let's see-what's the dear thing been scrawl-

ing this time?"

He held the envelope over the steam of the samovar with his trembling, inkstained fingers, disfigured with hangnails. He lifted the flap carefully and sniffed at the crackling sheet of handmade paper. Then, bent forward beneath the lamp, he began to read the letter:

My DEAR AND DARLING SASHA:

I can't stand this separation any longer. Yesterday my husband found your letter on my dressing table. I was frightened to death, dear, for your sake—and mine, too. He asked me from whom the letter was, and I told him from a girl friend. He cast a suspicious squint at me-you know that look of his.

Oh, Sasha, I'm in such fear of him! How dare he suspect me? I'm not deceiving him, am I—seeing it is you I love? And I do love you, dear. Let us meet Saturday—in the train. Oh, the joy of those few hours with you! I really don't know how I shall be able to wait until Saturday. How fortunate for us that his aunt lives in Krazin! I can't bear the old thing, only he is tremendously pleased that I want to pay her a visit. Until Saturday, dearest!

earest. Your loving, LISA.

Having read the letter, Krymsin grinned mischievously and blinked his

little eyes at the hanging lamp.
"Serves him right!" he muttered. "That old fellow must be taught a lesson. Just because he's got money he imagines that his wife simply must remain true to him. No, no, my dear fellow—that's expecting altogether too much! Think she's your serf, eh? Petrovitch—now there's a man for you! They're going to meet in a railway carriage—what an idea! And I'll be able to have a peep at them on Saturday—when the train comes along! Of course, I'll see them—I must see them. Good business! Ah!"

Krymsin, in the intolerable silence of the station, had learned to speak to himself. He began to brood darkly, then said:

then said:

"Of course. Why not?"

He shook his head, sealed the envelope again and sank back into his chair. Shrunken together, meagre, abject, threadbare, he smilingly resumed his work. After he had sorted the pile of letters, Krymsin yawned, stretched and poured out a glass of tea for himself. Then slowly stirring the hot golden liquid with his clinking spoon and blowing smoke into the air, he resumed his musings upon Lisa. His staring eyes remained immovably fixed upon a great blot of ink which disfigured the opposite wall.

This irregular blot had little jets on all sides and a thin, snaky runnel leading to the floor. It stood just above one of the brown flowers upon the cheap wallpaper. Whenever Krymsin happened to be in a contemplative mood, he would stare starkly at this blot; he would scowl at it with loathing and an

implacable hatred.

This blot had been made by the former postmaster, who had served at this office for over twenty years and then finally had drunk himself to death. Krymsin had been appointed in the dead man's place, after failing in his examination for a better post. He had no relatives, and his few comrades soon forgot him after he had settled down at this solitary station in the very center of the steppes. The nearest station was thirty versts distant. Day after day he saw the same few living creatures—the station master, the two switchmen, the telegraph operator, the chickens behind the fence. And all around him stretched the vasty undulations of the steppes. The national highroad and the long lines of the telegraph poles ran on into the horizon to East and West.

Once every day the "omnibus" train, crammed to its doors, would make a halt of precisely two minutes. Now and again some passenger, stiff and cramped from sitting too long, would jump from the footboard and make a few swift paces back and forth in front of the carriages, from whose windows strange faces would peer

down indifferently.

At first Krymsin had cherished the intention of striking up a friendship with the station master and the telegraph operator. But the telegraphist had an abominably tainted breath. Besides, what good would he derive from such an acquaintanceship? And then the station master—well, his children were everlastingly sick. Moreover, he was a sour and taciturn sort of man. Krymsin had then tried the experiment of drowning his loneliness in alcohol, but this produced such a ghastly melancholia in him that he thought seriously of hanging himself by the rope that hung from a beam in the woodshed.

Finally he began to open the letters that passed through his hands. This occupation he found most fascinating—

even absorbing.

Every night after the postbags came in, Krymsin would remain seated until long after midnight, reading and gloating over strange secrets. He began to understand something of human relationships and the ways of men. He realized in what craft and subtleties they took refuge, and the things which they made their chief concern in life.

He was no longer filled with morose anger when the train rolled out of the station at night. He would follow it with sly winks and grins, and chuckle to himself and think:

"There's no use trying to hide anything from me, my dear sirs; I know all about you."

He was soon able to distinguish love letters from business letters by the mere inscriptions upon the envelope, even when the latter bore no imprint. He knew which were begging letters and which the letters of officials or superiors. The begging letters were always carefully inscribed with all the full titles of the addressees, and without alteration. The address was always complete and the flourishes of the capitals painfully elaborate. Persons of a superior class, according to the Russian fashion, would always underline the surname of the person as well as the name of the city. Business letters were usually in typewriting, or written by hand in a slurred and running script, but quite legible.

And the love letters!

These were Krymsin's particular joy. He read every one of them. He feasted his soul upon the variety, and sometimes the choice details, of their contents. Some of these letters were in an abominable hand, hardly to be deciphered, just as though the lady had been afraid to trust the treacherous paper. Others wrote with erratic hen tracks, made blots or pressed flowers between the sheets. Sometimes the pen had stuck in the paper and made an explosive little black star. Here and there, in place of words, there would be dots or dashes. This always made Krymsin laugh so heartily that he would be forced to take off his silver-rimmed eyeglasses and wipe his eyes.

Krymsin took great delight in the triumph of the lovers. Obstacles to their passion singularly depressed him. When expecting some eagerly awaited answer, a fierce impatience would consume him. Some of the choicest of these amatory masterpieces he transcribed into a penny copybook which he labeled: "Poignant Epistles of

Various Persons."

After a few years Krymsin grew so accustomed to living and thinking and feeling by means of these letters that he found it impossible to imagine how a correspondence could be carried on except through him.

One day he had opened a letter in a pale blue envelope:

Sasha, I love you, just as surely as the sun shines. You tell me I am beautiful and adorable—that you love my little hands and feet. But isn't all this your very own? My dear, don't I ———

And so on—all in the same strain, a letter swarming with expressions of

love. It was signed: "Lisa."

Krymsin pondered for a long time upon this epistle. There was a significant air about it, just as if something really momentous had happened. Soon these letters in pale blue envelopes began to flutter through his office every day. In them all sorts of petty little details of life were described, and many intimate little domestic matters which caused Krymsin to puff up his cheeks and burst forth into monosyllables:

'Ahem! Ah! Good!"

Poems followed, and flowers, and melting, impassioned phrases—whole pages of them, all the delicate sorceries by means of which a young woman exerts her spells. And then, at last, came the photograph! Krymsin contemplated this for a long time. He even attempted to take a tracing of it, but failed.

He began to see Lisa's beautiful face in his dreams; he began to long for her. The day after he would usually take to the bottle, but this merely aggravated his yearning. Finally, in desperation, he procured a little gunpowder from the district policeman, pricked the name "Lisa" upon the soft flesh of his forearm and under the name a heart transfixed by an arrow. He rubbed the gunpowder into the raw tatooing, so as to make it permanent.

He now no longer opened the letters of Alexander Petrovitch Timenkoff, lest these destroy his illusion that Lisa was writing to him—Krymsin. At times he thought of himself as Alexander Petrovitch, and once he even addressed himself by that name, and enjoyed the pleasurable thrills that ran down his spine.

During his leisure hours—that is to

say, during the entire day—Krymsin would dream of a wreck upon the line. He pictured himself as plunging into the wreckage of the burning carriages and rescuing Lisa at the peril of his own life. He would carry her in his arms, cradle her tenderly—thus. And she would whisper into his ear:

"You have saved my life; you must love me, too." Then she would kiss him

on the forehead.

Dreaming thus, he would wipe his moist forehead with his handkerchief, so as to have it immaculate. And his mustaches, which smelled strongly of tobacco, had the bad habit of dipping themselves into his tea. And the eyes would remain riveted upon the wall-paper, staring at that big inkspot just above the brown flower, that blot which was as a seal to the tragedy of drunkenness. And this accursed blot reminded him that, so far as he was concerned, life was only an utterly dreary and empty waste.

II

The last letter, in which Lisa gave Alexander Petrovitch full directions as to the day of her departure and the train by which she was to travel to Krazin, came on a Thursday. The two days that elapsed until Saturday went by like a dream, a dream in which only one single flaming fact swam upon the surface of Krymsin's consciousness. He was to see Lisa—at last!

Scarcely knowing what to do with himself, Krymsin's went stalking through the wormwood of the open steppe and gazed toward the West. There, behind that endless, dwindling line of telegraph posts, the train would come up that night. A quail fluttered past Krymsin's feet, a ground squirrel whistled from his little mound of clay, and the sun blazed down over all. Krymsin's pale eye flung a glance at the sun and his thoughts flew naturally to Lisa at her noonday meal. No doubt she was sitting opposite her husband at table and saying to him in an innocent tone:

"I think I'll go and see Auntie for a day or two . . ."

Her husband rudely buries his face in his newspaper and is silent. Lisa's face assumes an expression of shyness and fear. Suppose he refuses to let her go? But no. "Just as you please," he says coldly. "Don't care if you do"... But it is a long time before the train starts. Her whole heart is in a state of wild upheaval. She goes into her boudoir to lay out her prettiest frock—all for him.

Krymsin pressed together the lids of his blinking eyes, and then with bowed head walked toward the fence, against which he kicked off the bitter dust of

the wormwood shrubs.

Then he went back and sat leaning against the brown, weatherbeaten boards of the station. A long-legged cock with quivering comb stalked majestically at his feet; two hens ruffled themselves in the dusty ditch. The leaves of the half-dead poplar had withered long since, and overhead in the dwelling of the station master a child was crying dolorously.

"Ach!" growled Krymsin. "If there were only a bit of a brook in the blasted place! But we haven't even water. It's simply unendurable!"

The sobbing of the child became unendurable, too. Krymsin trotted into the first class waiting room, where it was somewhat cooler. The same lithographed placards of a steamship company and a firm of cartridge manufacturers had been hanging at the side of the tall tile stove for over ten years. On the opposite wall there was a flyspotted time table and scrawled across its face in lead pencil an inscription two years old: "Ivan Sinizyn, June 1912." A carafe filled with murky yellow water, which no one ever drank, stood on the round and dusty table. And that was all.

Krymsin stared at the water bottle; then the buzzing and thudding of the flies against the window came to his ears. He went out into the luggage shed.

Here, just opposite the door, the lug-

gage porter slept extended at full length upon the iron-covered counter. His red and horny hand rested upon his abdomen, and the flies were creeping about his open mouth and its tow-colored mustaches.

"Hey there! What are you sleeping

for?" said Krymsin, spiritlessly.

He remained for some minutes staring with melancholy eyes at the recumbent porter, and then went into the unpaved yard behind the station. The farm sheds, with their roofs of thatch, were all locked; the sparrows were chattering near the stable; and behind the railway fence, behind the dusty road, the steppes lay extended into endless distances. In the foreground of the fields a tethered horse was capering about.

ing about.

"What a life!" groaned Krymsin. "I simply can't stand it any longer. Oh, if only that train would pull in!"

III

THE setting sun lowered for a long time across the steppes before it faded into the night. At last the sharp little stars began to shimmer. The lamps of the station were lit; in the distance fell the green wings of the semaphore; and the electric bell which announced the approach of a train tinkled monotonously.

Krymsin sat on a bench on the platform and peered into the duskiness of

the steppes toward the left.

A slight chill ran over his spare body, which he had encased in a short jacket. His brain was nebulous with the strain and intensity of his long waiting.

Somewhere toward the left a tiny point was burning upon the vastness of the plain—apparently a bonfire made by plowmen. But the bright point grew brighter and larger. Then it divided itself into three lights and a distant whistle was heard. Krymsin realized that the train was drawing near. He leaped to his feet and adjusted his cap; his heart was beating violently.

Soon after the whistling of the train there came a sound of jingling bells from the opposite direction, frantic bells, jingling ever nearer as though the driver of the vehicle had seen the train approaching and jumping to his feet had rained blows upon his horses. Then, as the furnace of the locomotive flung wide its fiery wings to either side and rushed past the semaphore, and the lines were flooded with gold, a *troika* rattled over the stones and came flying into the station yard.

"There he is!" thought Krymsin,

and turned around hastily.

The dusty headlights of the locomotive came flying nearer. They chased the shadow of the station master from the platform. The thunderous monster of glowing steel and brass wallowed in clouds of steam; the yellow windows of the lighted compartments came gliding toward the platform slowly and still more slowly. The brilliantly lighted first class division halted directly in front of Krymsin.

A tall man of powerful build, dressed in a Havelock, now came hurrying up from the station yard, glancing anxiously about him. He wore a full beard, cut square and carefully combed. Krymsin threw him a squinting glance, stood on tiptoe and began to peer into the window of the compartment, which was upholstered entirely in red.

In the overhead rack he saw a fashionable straw hat decorated with flowers and berries. A scarf of delicate lace hung from one of the hooks, and a green traveling rug.

"Lisa's!" he murmured.

A sound of feminine laughter from the end platform of the long car broke upon his ears. Trembling in every limb, he turned around.

"Here! Alexander Petrovitch, here!"
The gentleman with the square-cut beard cried, "Aha!" He lifted his hat in greeting, then leaped up the steps of the car.

"They kissed," said Krymsin to himself—"kissed each other on the lips!"

He saw the door to the compartment inside slide back. She entered first, her eyes half shut, laughing happily, as though she were being fondled. Then

he came in, blithe, buoyant. Lisa flung the door shut with a swift gesture, as though she had waited a long, long time for just this moment. She flung her arms about Timenkoff's neck and sat down, throwing back her head. And Timenkoff, his eyes glittering, began to shower kisses upon her lips. Krymsin observed that Lisa wore a gray checked traveling dress with many buttons, one of which had escaped from its fastening. The dark, heavy mass of her hair was crushed upon her shoulders, and her bare elbow with its ravishing dimple twitched upon Timenkoff's shoulders. Her other hand lay on the plush cushion of the seat—palm upward. Krymsin stared at the kissing couple. Unconsciously a groan, like that of some wounded animal came to his lips. He did not hear the ringing of the bell for departure, nor the hiss of the airbrakes nor the rattling of the chains. Suddenly the lighted window began to swim past his eyes-he ran and followed it.

Lisa and Timenkoff had torn themselves apart, and were now holding each other's hands and laughing with open mouths, showing their fine white teeth.

The platform ended abruptly, and Krymsin almost went plunging off it. The train whirled by him and away, showing its two red lanterns at the back. Krymsin followed it stupidly with his eyes, then went back to his office, his hands plunged deep into his pockets, his lips pressed strangely together. He drew forth a key, unfastened the padlock on the postbag and emptied the pile of letters upon the dirty table. Then he sat down and his hands began their automatic movements. But his eyes refused to take in the addresses—they saw nothing but the transparent window of that compartment and the couple kissing each

other amidst the red plush cushions. Perhaps it was only a vision; perhaps all this had never existed, save in his mind! Perhaps he had merely conceived these two heads in his brain, united them and given them over to love!

"Now, that'll do!" he muttered, in a harsh voice. "You've kissed-each

other-that'll do!"

Then they seized each other's hands and began to laugh. A dimple formed in her cheek and the nostrils of her little nose dilated.

"That's all right, my dears," said Krymsin, as he rose and leaned against the table. "You may kiss again."

And yet the profiles of these two wonderful human beings did not approach each other again; behind them the brown rose of the wallpaper glimmered into view, and just above it, a great blot of ink.

Krymsin's jaw fell. He cried out feverishly: "Get out!" And the heads

vanished.

Then he seized the ink bottle, and bending over the table, hurled it against the blot of ink. The bottle burst, and the ink spread itself over the wall and made a new blot as big as a sheepskin.

"What!" yelled Krymsin. "Give myself up? I won't—I won't! I'm not under your authority! What the

devil-"

He began to tear up the letters; he crushed them into wads and hurled them against the wet inkstain. He spat upon the table and gnashed his teeth.

The station master rushed into the post office, saw the havoc, and with one blow, felled Krymsin to the floor. He overpowered him, then had him bound, and the very next morning Krymsin was transported to the hospital at Kreisstadt.



I'M AN UGLY OLD MAID

By Ione Harlan James

I'M an ugly old maid. Nobody knows it any better than I do. No one ever told me I have a beautiful complexion. I haven't. It's muddy. was never told my eyes were like great liquid pools. They are the color and expression of mud. I'm near sighted and I wear glasses that hang onto my ears, which stand out from my head. My hair has never been called Titian, or the color of burnished copper, or auburn. It's a muddy red and red it always has been called, when it was mentioned at all. I wear plainly tailored clothes to make myself as inconspicuous as possible. In color, mostly brown. I like brown; it blends in with the rest of me. So at a glance to the casual observer (and let me assure you that I am never observed more than casually) I am just as attractive as a study in Mud. All women have enough of the maternal instinct to want to hear themselves called by that beautiful name, "Mother"; but the nearest I ever get to having that desire fulfilled is when some of my close friends call me "muddy." Also I have heard it said that a few of my enemies call me by that same sweet term and without a doubt it isn't because they can't talk plain or because they lisp.

If I had lived fifty years ago, I would have been not only an ugly old maid, I would have been a poor Godforsaken something, upon whom all would have looked with a mixture of pity and derision. After my twenty-fifth year my family would have accepted me with resignation, knowing that ever after I would be a permanent fixture in the household. If I had attempted mixing with my former school

friends who had been more fortunate in finding keepers than had I, they would have left me to myself to gather in corners and pity me. Yes, there is no question about it. If I had lived fifty years ago, I would have been a

complete failure.

As it is, I'm a product of the Twentieth Century. I am a self-made woman. I'm thirty-five years old, and I admit it. Yes, I admit it gladly because I am usually taken for forty or more and no woman, be she as ugly as a mud fence, wants her age to be stretched one whit. I am absolutely independent. I am the sole support of my family. My mother trembles every time a man looks my way for fear that the "head of the house" might take unto herself a mate, or mismate.

My married women friends respect me more than they do other women because I belong to the man's world rather than to theirs. They envy me my position and the independence they do not have. They figure that all they have is their husband, their beautiful home, their lovely children, plenty of leisure, and, horrid thought, absolute dependence.

I am accountable to no one. I pay just as much as I want to for a bonnet just as often as I want to and there is no one to ruin my pleasure in wearing it by making my little extravagance an enormity. No man sits opposite me to scowl when I sip my cocktail and puff my cigarette and to admire the same things in my neighbor who is younger than I, and pretty.

And now, lo and behold, it has come to pass! A man wants to marry me.

And you know why, and I know why. He sees not in me a woman but a meal ticket. When he offered me his heart and hand I recognized the hand as a lunch hook. And when he proposed he made the mistake of promising always to be good to me. Now, you see, it's like this: I've been so blooming good to myself for so many years that a promise of that kind fails to thrill me much. And goodness knows I like my occasional thrill as well as any one.

Now if this man had told me that I was irresistible, that my complexion was like peaches and cream, my eyes like great liquid pools, or my hair like burnished copper, then perhaps—I say perhaps—I might have succumbed—and kept him in the style to which he had always been accustomed. For, darn it, a woman's a woman, isn't she? So I repeat and reiterate—I'm an ugly old maid. Nobody knows it any better than I do.



CHANSON D'AMOUR À LA CARTE

By Owen Hatteras

MY love is like a chocolate soufflée, delicate, sweet, soft, pure, an enchantment to the eye.

Her cheeks have the caressing tenderness of a well-cooked ris de veau braisé

Jardinière.

She has at once the ethereal charm of Gervais crême and the solid goodness of jambon grillé aux oeufs.

When she is sad I see in her eyes the vasty, melancholious depth of legierte

Geflügelkleinsuppe.

When she smiles the heavens rain potage de volaille Camerani.

I love this sweet and succulent wench She reminds me of créme Bavaroise aux fraises. Of champignons madère. She has the reserve and aloofness of a salade de concombres and the glorious warmth of Rinderbrust mit Meerrettich.

I esteem her greatly. I almost prefer her to a pilau of lamb à la Turque.



THE DREAMER

By Muna Lee

NO dream that is not of you— Yet it is only you of all the world To whom I cannot tell my dreams.



A MAN'S man has to be either honest or clever, but a woman's man need only be susceptible.

BOXE ET POLICE

By Jacques Nayral

AYANT dépassé la trentaine et sentant que la "forme" lui échappait définitivement, l'ancien coureur cycliste Pastoureau songea qu'il était temps de faire une fin et de s'assurer une position sociale. Pastoureau avait gagné beaucoup d'argent, mais, hélas! imprévoyant comme la cigale, il avait, sans souci du lendemain, joui de la belle saison, et les économies qu'il aurait pu faire s'étaient évanouies dans la mousse de l'extra-dry et la fumée bleue des havanes.

Alors, Pastoureau s'avisa qu'étant superbement taillé, le corps des gardiens de la paix s'honorerait de l'accueillir.

Le destin en disposa conformément à ses désirs et M. Cogneur, commissaire de police du vingt et unième arrondissement, s'émerveilla de la belle recrue dont la préfecture lui confiait l'instruction.

M. Cogneur était un sportsman. Il savait sur le bout du doigt la liste de tous les records et les performances des champions. Pastoureau, naguère étoile des vélodromes, n'était point un inconnu, pour lui et fut du premier coup l'objet de sa vienveillance particulière. Ayant félicité l'ex-coureur de son entrée au service de la préfecture, il le confia aux soins du brigadier:

— Brigadier, dit M. Cogneur, prenez ce gaillard-là avec vous et, pour commencer, entrainez-le sur le punch-

Le punching-ball du commissariat se distinguait des appareils de même nature en ce qu'il était orné à sa partie supérieure d'un cornet semblable à ceux des phonographes.

— Voilà, dit simplement le brigadier

en montrant le ballon à Pastoureau. Cogne là-dessus et tâche de le faire taire.

— De le faire taire? interrogea Pas-

toureau, légèrement ahuri.

— Tape toujours, tu verras bien, répondit le brigadier sans s'expliquer davantage.

Pastoureau décocha un coup de poing. A sa grande stupéfaction, ce cri séditieux sortit du cornet.

— Mort aux v...!

Le brigadier éclata de rire.

—Ça t'épate, mon garçon? fit-il. Ça, vois-tu, c'est une invention au patron, et ça prouve qu'il n'est pas un bleu, pas vrai? pour avoir dégotté ce truc-là. T'as qu'à retaper dessus. Quand c'est que tauras cogne assez fort, let machin, il taira son bec.

De nouveau, Pastoureau s'évertua. Vains efforts, à chaque coup la voix répétait, ironique et nasillarde:

— Mort aux v...!

Le brigadier haussait les épaules. Dédaigneux de l'anatomie, il traduisait sa pensée en ces termes:

- T'as donc pas de moëlle dans les

veines, bon sang?

— J'ai souvent vu des combats de boxe, s'excusait Pastoureau, mais je n'ai pamais pratiqué.

Heureusement, le commissaire sur-

vint:

- Eh bien, ça va? demanda-t-il.

- M'en parlez pas, m'sieu le Commissaire, répondit le brigadier d'un ton de commisération. V'la plus de cent fois qu'il tape sur le machin sans y clore le bec.
- C'est curieux! bâti comme il est, observa le commissaire, il devrait y arriver du premier coup.

Puis, soudain, illuminé:

- Mais, brigadier, vous ne voyez donc rien?

— S'il vous plait?

— Ne vous ai-je pas dit cent fois que le moral doit aider les muscles? Ce gaillard-là est encore habillé en pékin. Comment voulez-vous que le cri de l'appareil l'impressionne suffisamment? Tenez, donnez-lui voter képi, votre képi seulement et vous allez voir.

Pastoureau, coiffé d'un képi, recom-

mença l'exercice.

- Mort aux v...! cria le phonographe au premier coup de poing.

Mais il ne le répéta plus. D'un deuxième coup, formidable, celui-là, Pastoureau, rouge comme un homard, lui avait, comme disait le brigadier, carrément clos le bec.

— Bravo! s'écria le brigadier.

— Qu'est-ce que je vous disais? triompha le commissaire. La tête et les muscles, toujours!

En ce moment, un gros homme, la figure bouleversée, pénétra dans le com-

missariat, en vociférant:

— Au secours! Mais nom de nom,

dépêchez-vous de courir après lui.

En toute autre circonstance, cette entrée tumultueuse eût valu à l'intrus une sévère admonestation, et peut-ètre pis. Mais l'éclatante démonstration de ses théories avait mis le commissaire en belle humeur.

— Voyons, fit-il paternellement. Un peu moins de bruit. On vous a volé, sans doute?

- Oui, mon portefeuille avec neuf mille francs.

— Bon. Dans votre poche?

— Je le tenais à la main. Il me l'a arraché et s'est sauvé.

- Dans quelle direction?

— Du côté de la Seine, par l'avenue. — Bien. Comment est habillé votre voleur?

- Un pantalon vert, monsieur, des

espadrilles, une grande barbe rousse et

une casquette à carreaux.

- Parfait. Vous avez entendu, Pastoureau? Enfourchez une bicyclette et attrapez-moi ce lascar. Voilà une occasion de vous distinguer pour vos dé-

Pastoureau disparut, plein d'ardeur. Une demi-heure s'écoula. Le gros monsieur se répandait en lamentations.

— Pourvu qu'il le rattrape, mon Dieu. Pensez-vous qu'il le retrouvera,

monsieur le Commissaire?

Cette question, cent fois répétée, finissait par agacer le magistrat. Elle lui paraissait injurieuse pour la police, dont elle mettait en doute l'infaillibilité cent fois affirmée.

M. Cogneur s'apprêtait à rappeler à l'ordre vertement l'irrespectueux citoyen quand Pastoureau entra, suant, échevelé, les vêtements souillés et déchirés, la face rayonnante. Il bran-

dissait le portefeuille.

Le gros monsieur se précipita, tend ant vers le précieux objet des mains avides et tremblantes de joie. Mais le commissaire l'arrêta; on ne restituait pas ainsi un portefeuille. Il y avait des formalités. Le volé, qui ne l'etait plus, dut se résigner, tandis que M. Cogneur, selon son expression, opérait méthodiquement.

- Et d'abord, Pastoureau, demanda le magistrat, où avez-vous rejoint le

— Sur le quai.

- Pourquoi ne l'avez-vous pas ramené?

— Je n'y ai pas pensé.

- Vous êtes nouveau, c'est votre excuse.

— Mais j'ai le portefeuille.

— C'est une compensation, mais ce n'est pas l'essential. Le plus important, c'est d'arrêter les gens. Il vaudrait mieux que le portefeuille fût dans la Seine et le voleur ici.



PANTALOONS A-POSTURE

By George Jean Nathan

HUS dulcetly the mimes when lifted the curtain on Mr. Cyril Harcourt's drama, "The Intruder" (deceased):

Rene Levardier: I shall leave by the ten o'clock train for Fontinblow.

Pauline (his wife): What! You are going

to Fontaineblue tonight?

George Guerand (her lover): But I did not believe there was a night train to Foun-

For a study of contemporaneous mummering, would that an evening before this stage had been yours! You would have been fetched, I promise you. You would have seen artist and artiste act the play almost entirely with the eyebrows. You would have seen the leading lady interpret deep nervous emotion with the upper portion of her corset. You would have heard allusions to the Pont Noof and you would have seen the actor who played the thief adjust his hat to his hip and, with feet akimbo, defy the hero who was standing beside him by addressing his remarks hotly to the head usher. You would have seen the leading lady, grief-stricken, sink into a chair, clasp kerchief to mouth and move her head slowly from side to side like Mr. Montague Glass' Mozart Rabiner. would have seen the actor playing the husband halt long enough at the door on his exit to give the audience an eye: thus registering suspicion. would have seen the actor playing the lover halt long enough at the door on his exit to give the audience the same eye: thus registering alarm. You would have heard an allusion to the cohan-seearge and you would have seen the actor playing the husband indicate doubt by biting the right corner of his lower lip and the actor playing the lover indicate defiance by taking his hands out of his pockets.

In short, you would have been reminded of the fireside story of the local actor, who, at the last moment called upon to substitute in a play adapted from a foreign source, rushed out upon the stage the opening night and proudly negotiated "Oui, oui, monsieur" as "Owie, owie, monster!"

In no other profession in the world. of course, is there so much incompetence as in acting. Not even in dramatic criticism. The reasons for this incompetence are familiar to readers of Diderot, Coquelin, Lewes, Walkley, George Moore, Anatole France, Tree and such others as have treated of the subject. But some of these reasons, though familiar, are not as sound as they might be. Tree, for example, himself an actor, argues, as did Coquelin before him, that the little knowledge which is supposed to be dangerous in most walks of life is the desideratum of the stage artist—the little French, German, Italian, music, And then, following up this spruce brain maneuver, the gentleman observes that where education tends to the repression of emotion, the actor lives and moves and has his being in its expression. Mr. Tree here obviously waxes ridiculous. To argue that education is not necessary to an actor in that it will interfere with his expression of the emotions, to argue that he may the better express them if he does not know thoroughly what he is talking about, is to argue that Robert G. Ingersoll was less successful in impressing his audiences than Robert Downing. A farce actor or a melodrama actor may, of course, be at once an ignoramus and a successful stage performer. But small wonder (realizing most actors believe with Mr. Tree) that such as Ibsen and Shakespeare and Hauptmann are so regularly murdered in their tracks! Indeed, no better proof of the vacuity of Mr. Tree's belief may be had than in Mr. Tree's own performances.

Even where the actor is not possessed of a thorough education, his histrionic eminence in the community depends largely upon his cajoling that community into believing he is possessed of such an education—as witness the case in our own community of Mrs. Fiske. Sarah Bernhardt is a great actress because she is an educated wom-True, the greater the idiot, the more vividly he may express such physical emotions related to amour and the chasing of a lady around the room as are part and parcel of the Sardou species of drama; but the mental emotions of the more modern dramaturgy require certainly for their expression something other than mere ear-wig-gling and leg work.

ever, is not that he is not, generally, an educated person, but that, generally, he has not even a vague smattering of the minor knowledges necessary to his art. The average actor or actress on our own stage, for example, cannot pronounce correctly three simple words in French, German or Italian, cannot play, even amateurishly, the piano, does not know how to handle a foil, cannot dance two steps of the minuet, cannot read even the first measure of so incomplex a composition as Liszt's "Von der Wiege bis zum Grabe." The average actor thinks of his newly acquired rôle principally in terms of the clothes it will permit him to wear. Twenty years ago a dramatist

could rely, in part at least, upon his

actors. Glance at the plays of the pe-

riod and you will find trivial stage di-

rections and scant instructions as to

costuming. To-day Shaw's stage direc-

tions to the actors occupy as much

The difficulty with the actor, how-

space in a play manuscript as does the acting play itself. And Barrie's are often almost as long as Shaw's.

Walkley says that an actor must be impressed by the outward and visible signs of things rather than by the things themselves. It is true that an actor is so impressed, but this does not, assuredly, argue that he should be. What Walkley should have said was that a theater audience is impressed by the outward and visible signs of things rather than by the things themselves and that, this being the case, the actor—being by nature of his craft a lazy fellow—takes the same easy course so to impress his audience. To contend that this is, therefore, just what the actor ought do-and that it is but fair to allow him to do it—is to contend that the best actor is that actor who interprets not the rôle written for him by the dramatist but the audience's composite idea of the rôle written for him by the dramatist. And to make this contention is to speak in terms of mob popularity, which popularity is, of course, ever vitally at odds with art of any kind—even with what Moore called the lowest of all the arts, acting. The plain truth, patently enough, is that the actor bears the same relation to an artist that the phonograph bears to Madame Sembrich. The artist is contemptuous of the crowd. The only actor in America who is contemptuous of the crowd is Mr. Arnold Daly. And Daly, by that mark, is the only actor in America who approaches to the rank of an artist. And Daly, as actors are regarded by the theatergoing crowd, is not what is known to them as a successful actor.

The actor thinks in terms of what his audience will think. Mr. William Faversham had once the impertinent intelligence to portray Iago as he himself thought that character should be portrayed and his audiences, who had been used to the rubber-stamp notion of Iago, felt themselves slighted and would have nothing to do with the characterization. Other actors, playing like merchants the safe side, merely sell to

their audiences the characterizations of the rôles and the appurtenances thereto that the audiences are accustomed to. Let an actor playing an English character correctly recite the word specialty as speciality and, as was the case with Miss Grace George last season, the audience will promptly snicker its distrust. Let an actor playing a judge enact the rôle in a make-up resembling Mr. Justice Freddie Kernochan in place of the customary make-up resembling Russ Whytal and he will be a gloomy failure

in the audience's eye.

I cannot believe, for all that has been said and said eloquently to the contrary, that the numskull makes the best actor. It is to me inconceivable that Havelock Ellis, incog., could not have played the doctor in "Damaged Goods" very much better and very much more convincingly than the actor who did play the part or that Finley Peter Dunne couldn't have played the Irishman in "General John Regan" several times better than Mr. Charles Hawtrey. Or that Wilton Lackaye couldn't play half the parts on the New York stage at the moment twice as well as they are being played.

Yet, in spite of all these remarks, picture to yourself the most intelligent and best actor in the whole world playing John Gabriel Borkman. Picture this actor in the midst of a superb performance. Picture him captivating the most intelligent audience ever gathered together into a theater. Picture his keen strokes of characterization, his perfect articulation, his own clear mentality gleaming through the Ibsen script. Then—suddenly—picture, in the very midst of this remarkable impersonation of the rôle, the great actor accidentally splitting his pants!

And, having succeeded in picturing this, you have succeeded co-ordinately in picturing the tumbling to earth of every fine theory of the art of acting ever written—including particularly

this, my own.

Coming now again, at length, to "The Intruder," I need detain you but a few moments. A mixture of Henri Bern-

stein and Maurice Hennequin, but without the former's constructive skill or the latter's humour, the play marked still another assault upon the nose of the venerable triangle. The central episode of the nocturnal burglar encountering the wife and her lover in each other's arms was an ancient out of numerous scripts. Miss Norma Munroe used the notion back in the days of Mrs. Osborne's Playhouse-I recall hearing a reading of the play. though I never saw it acted; and as a boy of fifteen I remember seeing the situation in a piece in a little theater on the Boulevard Bonne Nouvelle. As recently as four years ago, indeed, I encountered the morceau once again in a vaudeville sketch in one of the small playhouses in the Kaisergarten in Vienna. And Mr. Harcourt brought nothing new to the whimsey.

II

Mr. HENRY MILLER once said that the trouble with the business he was in was that it was too theatrical. One sometimes feels that the trouble with the business Mr. Winthrop Ames is in is that it isn't theatrical enough. There is a something to the efforts of the latter-a slight aloofness, an undue reticence, mayhap—that one feels handicaps in a measure the theater he cicerones. A talented, educated fellow and one pleasant to behold in a play world peopled, as is the present play world, so largely by ex-sidewalk-solicitors for the Newsboys' Home, Ames brings to his work a sense of discrimination, a sense of beauty and ideals, at once charming and timeful. And as for the contention one hears now and again from serious clowns that he is impracticable, it may be dismissed with the statement that the difficulty with the theater at the present time is that there are already altogether too many practical producers in it. As a writer for a better theater, give me any day a so-called impracticable man like Ames above a hundred practical Joseph Brookses. But-what one wishes Mr.

Ames had more of is that direct bluntness, that saucy fire, which injects into even the best of acted plays a better

and a warmer glow.

When I sit in Mr. Ames' Little Theater, I am, by the very feel in the air, charmed as I am charmed in the home of a congenial host—and when I am not pleased with what Mr. Ames presents me I feel somehow the same distaste for finding fault, however deserved, that I feel upon arising from a friend's dinner table (though in such cases no one has ever accused my manners getting the better of my feelings) —yet I often in that lovely little playhouse feel like whistling or giving my nose a lusty blow or doing something disgraceful by way of injecting into the surroundings an air of greater excitement and camaraderie. I am quite certain, knowing Mr. Ames as I'do, that he would be the last man in the world to object to my doing such a thing-he would, indeed, probably like me to do it-but I am equally certain, knowing the gentleman as I do, that he would be the last man in the world to ask me to do such a thing. Yet I wish he would. It would, I feel sure, help both of us.

Aside from the merits of the play, "Hush," by Miss Violet Pearn, with which Mr. Ames has reopened his theater (personally I am not at all beguiled by it for it seems to me to lack the satiric wit absolutely essential to the telling of a tale of a young pseudoradical who seeks vainly to shock people), one cannot help believing that a more bourgeois showmanship would have better projected into the auditorium the materials in the manuscript. Mr. Ames has staged the play carefully and very attractively and he has, in the main, cast it efficiently, but one misses in its exhibition and maneuvering the nearness and warmth that one must feel in the playhouse. The Little Theater stage was probably not more than twenty-five feet from my seat on the aisle in J, but it seemed a full quarter of a mile away. I could see plainly; I could hear clearly; but I couldn't feel at all. In

the great spaces of the late New Theater Mr. Ames once made two manuscripts glow—"The Piper" of Josephine Preston Peabody and the "Strife" of John Galsworthy—two of the very finest instances of staging the modern theater has known. The paradox of the very vastly less great spaces of the Little Theater and the corresponding diminution of the sense of warm propinquity, I leave for explanation to some critic more penetrating than I.

The notion, incidentally, that the New Theater failed because its auditorium was too big is donkey gabble. The auditoriums of the famous theaters of thirty years and more ago—the particular theaters, that is, from which have come down to us the best traditions of our stage-were in several cases as hulky as the auditorium of the New Theater. The notion that the New Theater failed, further, because the plays presented there were poor plays is equally sorry. Look over the list of productions made in that theater and compare them, in any way you choose, with the list of productions made in a corresponding period of time in any other theater in America. Ames probably did as well with the New Theater as any man one can summon to mind could have done with it. The New Theater failed, very simply and very uncritically, for the same reason that the Ritz hotels have succeeded. It was too democratic and not sufficiently exclusive. It made a good start and then slipped. For, after its first month and with high prosperity staring it in the face, it began with diligent gusto to inform the yokelry that it did not have to put on evening dress to get in. And the yokelry, thus persuaded that any mere hooligan might attend, remained sniffishly away. Had the New Theater let it be felt that no person unadorned with a stiff shirt could enter, it would have been quite as impossible to get a seat at its box-office as it was to get a table in the Savoy supper room in London during the American travelling season.

Such is the republican essence.

III

In his dramatization of Mr. Maximilian Foster's periodical serial "Rich Man, Poor Man," Mr. George Broadhurst has written the most carefully thought out, the most piquant and altogether the very best play for children since Mr. Winthrop Ames presented "Snow-White" in the Little Theater three seasons ago. The skill of Mr. Broadhurst in dramaturgy of this kind of appeal is too well known to call for comment, and in the instance of this, his latest effort, he has surpassed himself. There is to this effort all the Broadhurst innocent charm and artlessness, for few men writing for the American theater understand so well and so completely as this dramatist the child mind. And to that mind and to that heart he addresses himself with an immense force and an immense subjugation and enchantment. I believe I do not exaggerate when I write that, whatever my learned colleague, Mr. Lawrence Reamer of The Sun, or whatever so sour an old fellow as myself may think of the gentleman's work, there is probably in all America no playwriter who knows better the stratagems and tricks wherewith to bring happiness to the kiddies.

The fairy tale which Mr. Broadhurst has now on view in the Forty-eighth Street Theater is of a poor little orphan who one day discovers she is the long lost granddaughter of a millionaire, but who, when later she finds her dream of riches shattered, learns that after all nothing matters in this world but love. "What," I recall the philosophy as being, "are silks and jewels and a fine house when the heart is aching?" True, in the playwright's treatment of the story there are several touches sufficiently bizarre to puzzle the grown person-as, for example, the manner in which the boarding house tenants invade severally and at insouciant random the home of the artistocrats who have adopted the former pension waitress-but it were an unkind and altogether unnecessary criticism which

would put such butterflies to the wheel and seek so to spoil the children's pleasure. Mr. Broadhurst has done his work very, very well. I shall take my own little boys and girls to see his play at the first Saturday matinée.

IV

THE Messrs. Megrue's and Cobb's "Under Sentence" is a better play than it is. It is a pity, therefore, that the authors did not take greater pains with it and develop its potentialities. Handled in the spirit of its last act—a somewhat whimsical treatment of the current prison reform hysteria—and so deleted of its earlier Hal Reid melodramatics, the piece would be given a doubled bounce and interest. As it stands, the manuscript is not without the obvious qualities that generally lubricate the stalls, though, too, it contains a really well-written scene or so. But that the play which "Under Sentence" should have been is not the play which "Under Sentence" is must be apparent to anyone who is amused by its final act and left supine by its others. Some of my colleagues have compared the piece with Galsworthy's "Justice." "Under Sentence" bears the same relation to "Justice" that the Saturday Review bears to the Saturday Evening Post. "Justice" was inspired; "Under Sentence" was perspired. One was written; the other, built. The Megrue who did "It Pays to Advertise" and the Cobb who cracked the joke about the San Francisco earthquake are better men to have handled the theme of "Under Sentence" than the Megrue who wrote "Under Fire" and the Cobb who is described on the George Doran Publishing Company's book jackets. The former gentlemen should not have permitted the latter gentlemen to collaborate with them.

77

In a theater that believes David Belasco, Augustus Thomas, Mrs. Fiske and Robert Edmond Jones to be in

their several ways great artists, it is quite natural that a genuine theatrical artist, an artist of penetrating taste, fine feeling and delicate perception, should be overlooked. And not merely overlooked, but shouldered aside, at the very thought of him, with breezy derision. And so it comes about that Mr. Florenz Ziegfeld, saving the clear vision of my travelled friend Sherwin, which has observed in the fellow the temperament and execution of the real artist of the theater, has yet to be recognized for the fine skill that is his. It is, of course, as difficult for the average American, who habitually confuses the egg with the hen, to persuade himself that an artist and a music show may in any way be related as it is for him to recognize the artist in a man who, like Ade, writes mere slang or in a woman who, like Lilith Benda, writes mere magazine stories about married couples who fall out of love with each other, get drunk, and fall in again, and about young girls who find in obscene laughter the spark that sets great music aglowing through the world.

There is no producer in existence who, in his field, in any degree approaches to this Ziegfeld. I have sat under them all. Out of the vulgar leg-show, Ziegfeld has fashioned a thing of grace and beauty, of loveliness and charm. He knows colours as a painter knows colours; he knows form; he knows quality and mood. He has lifted, with sensitive skill, a thing that was mere food for lecherous baldheads and downy college boys out of its low estate and into a thing of symmetry and bloom. To appreciate what Ziegfeld has done, it is only necessary to sit before the efforts of such of his competitors as Karl Meinhard in Germany, Jacques-Charles in France or the presiding genius at the Raimund-Theater in Vienna (I forget his name). A man of taste in its nicest sense (rather than in its indiscriminate New York Times sense of tribute to any actor who doesn't pull up his trousers when he sits down), the fellow is. Those who see in his "Follies" and in

his "Frolic" merely a number of young women running around the stage half-dressed are the same persons who have become prohibitionists because they haven't been able to locate the café that bought the picture that used to hang over the Hoffman House bar.

As to the claims of the others who. as opposed to this Ziegfeld, are regarded as truer artists of the local theater, our old friend Schopenhauer did away with such as Belasco when he observed that "It is essential to a work of art that it should give the form alone without the matter. . . . This is really the reason why wax figures produce no æsthetic impression and, therefore, are not, in the æsthetic sense, works of art at all; although if they were well made they produce an illusion a hundred times greater than the best picture or statue could effect; so that if deceptive imitation of reality were the object of art, they would have to take the first place." As for Thomas, recall Derély's "In an age when the struggle for life has become more exclusive than ever, is it not an empty anachronism to represent on the stage only the struggle for woman?" Of such as Madame Fiske, her celebrated fellow-actor's, "The actor may mark with his imprint the parts that he interprets; but this imprint must be so well confounded with the reality of the personage as not to be realized by the spectator without reflection and comparison." And of such as Jones, Delaroche's "An artist must compel nature to pass through his intelligence and his heart." It took the American theater ten years to realize that George M. Cohan had other talents than catarrh and hair that bobbed up and down. It will take the American theater quite as long to realize that Mr. Ziegfeld has other talents than Justine Johnston and Olive Thomas.

VI

It is one of the characteristics of Mr. W. Somerset Maugham's so-called epigrammatic comedies—so painstaking and obvious are the author's plants and

cues for bright lines—that one knows in advance precisely what his characters are going to say and that one then finds that what one thought they were going to say is much brighter than what they really do say. For example, when in his latest piece, "Caroline," his elderly and already somewhat skeptic lovers, discussing prosaically their forthcoming wedded life, suddenly begin quarreling over their union, one knows that what will follow will be the man's conciliatory "There, there, dear Caroline; let us look on our coming marriage merely as a disagreement to agree." But what actually fellows is the man's "Let's not quarrel now, Caroline; we will have plenty of time to quarrel after we're married"-a line favourite of every team of low sidewalk comedians in the small-time vaudevilles. And so it goes. That there is a certain graceful quality to Maugham's writing, that he writes a vastly more engaging English than the majority of quill-drivers who contribute to the stage of our own country, is a matter scarcely open to question. But that he is a wit or a writer possessed of even a facile cleverness is a thing of another colour. The local newspaper comparison of his play, "Caroline," with the comedies of Oscar Wilde is surely a something to jounce the humours and stir the bowels. In all of the play, from beginning to end, there isn't one-tenth the wit of the American Tom Barry's "Upstart" which was ridiculed out of court by the daily gazettes after a few performances several years ago in the Maxine Elliott Theater, onetwentieth the wit of the American George Bronson Howard's "Snobs" which suffered a like fate at the Hudson Theater—or one-fiftieth the wit of Mencken's new brew of speculations enclosed between the covers of "A Little Book in C major." If you are one to doubt, compare Maugham's "Marriage doesn't change a woman much. She remains just the same, only more so," with Mencken's "The charm of a man is measured by the charm of the women who think that he is a scoun-

drel." Or Maugham's "Men don't want to marry. It's not their nature. You have to give them a little push or you'll never bring them to it," with Mencken's "How little it takes to make life perfect! A good sauce, a cocktail after a hard day, a girl who kisses with her mouth half open!" Maugham's "Women make such a distinction between the truth and the true truth" with Mencken's "Since Shakespeare's day more than a thousand different actors have played Hamlet. No wonder he is crazy?" Or the former's "It is in railway stations that a man shows his superiority to a woman" with the latter's "The one unanswerable objection to Christianity is that the God it asks us to worship, if the descriptions of its official spokesmen are to be believed, is a vastly less venerable personage than Ludwig van Beethoven." Or the former's "Nothing is so pleasant as to think of the sacrifices one will never have to make" with the latter's "When a husband's story is believed, he begins to suspect his wife."

But I prove here what is already perfectly known. Mr. Maugham is merely a pretty juggler of pretty words who blithesomely tosses them aloft and lets them fall about him in indiscriminate, pretty little piles that have plenty of cake-frosting but little meaning and less humour. The local identification of Mr. Maugham's "Caroline" with the comedies of Wilde has, truth to tell, just a bit of pathos about it. The performances of the newspapers in their sedulously prudent blinking of the transparent trash that blankets the contemporaneous stage and their ecstatic whooping-up of any wares better than tenth-grade no longer fool anybody. Despite their pleasant madnesses, business, save in isolated cases, is bad and art worse. Mr. George Tyler has long -and vainly-pointed out the fatuity of such a journalese ethic. The more a poor play is gushed over, the more status-and the more money-the theater will eventually lose by that gushing. It is out of the ashes of honesty that the theater of to-morrow must rise.

THE LITERARY SHAMBLES

By H. L. Mencken

§ 1

THE strained and tedious manner of "The Magazine in America," by Prof. Algernon Tassin, of Columbia University (Dodd-Mead), is almost enough to conceal the interest of its matter-almost, but fortunately not quite. The learned pundit writes with all the dullness of his flatulent order. and, as usual, he is most horribly dull when he is trying most kittenishly to be lively. I spare you examples of his writing; if you know the lady essayists of the United States, and their academic imitators in pantaloons, you know the sort of arch and whimsical guff he ladles out. But, as I have hinted, there is something worth attending to in his story, for all the defects of its presentation, and so his book is not to be sniffed at. He has, at all events, brought together a vast mass of scattered and concealed facts, and arranged them conveniently for whoever deals with them next. The job was plainly a long and laborious one, and rasping to the higher cerebral centers. The professor had to make his mole-like way through the endless files of old and stupid magazines; he had to read the insipid biographies and autobiographies of dead and forgotten editors, many of them college professors, preachers out of work, prehistoric uplifters and bad poets; he had to sort out the facts from the fancies of such incurable liars as Griswold and Poe; he had to hack and blast a path across a virgin wilderness. The thing was worth doing, and, as I say, it has been done with commendable pertinacity.

It is astounding, considering the

noisiness and nosiness of the American magazines today, to glance back at the timorous and bloodless quality of their progenitors. All of the early ones, when they were not simply monthly newspapers or almanacs, were depressingly "literary" in tone, and dealt chiefly in stupid poetry, silly essays and artificial fiction. The one great fear of their editors seems to have been that of offending someone; all of the pioneer prospectuses were full of assurances that nothing would be printed which even "the most fastidious" could object to. Literature, in those days, was almost completely cut off from life. It mirrored, not the struggle for existence, so fierce and dramatic in the new republic, but the flaccid reflections of feeble poetasters, self-advertising clergymen, sissified "gentlemen of taste," and other such donkeys. Poe waded into these literati and shook them up a bit, but even after the Civil War the majority of them continued to spin pretty cobwebs. Edmund Clarence Stedman and Donald G. Mitchell were excellent specimens of the clan; a lone survivor is to be found in William Winter. The "literature" manufactured by these tear-squeezers, though often enough produced in beer cellars, was frankly aimed at the Young Person. Its main purpose was to avoid giving offense; it breathed an empty and idiotic piety, a snug niceness, a sickening sweetness. It is as dead today as Baalam's ass.

The Atlantic Monthly was set up by men in revolt against this reign of mush, as Putnam's had been a few years before, but the business of reform proved to be difficult and hazardous, and it was a long while before a healthier breed of authors could be developed, and a public for them found. "There is not much in the Atlantic," wrote Charles Eliot Norton to Lowell in 1874, "that is likely to be read twice save by its writers, and this is what the great public likes . . . You should hear Godkin express himself in private on this topic." Harper's Magazine, in those days, was made up almost wholly of cribbings from England; the North American Review had sunk into stodginess and imbecility; Putnam's was dead, or dying; the Atlantic had yet to discover Mark Twain; it was the era of Godey's Lady's Book. The new note, so long awaited, was struck at last by Scribner's, now the Century (and not to be confused with the Scribner's of today). It not only threw all the old traditions overboard: it established new traditions almost at once. For the first time a great magazine began to take notice of the daily life of the American people. It started off with a truly remarkable series of articles on the war; it plunged into contemporary politics; it eagerly sought out and encouraged new writers; it began printing decent pictures instead of the old chromos; it forced itself, by the sheer originality and enterprise of its editing, upon the public attention. American literature owes more to the Century than to any other magazine, and perhaps American thinking owes almost as much. It was the first "literary" periodical to arrest and interest the really first-class men of the country. It beat the Atlantic because it wasn't burdened with the Atlantic's decaying cargo of Boston Brahmins. It beat all the others because it was infinitely and obviously better. Almost everything that is good in the American magazine of today, almost everything that sets it above the English magazine or the Continental magazine, stems from the Century.

At the moment, of course, it suffers a sort of eclipse, and the newspapers but recently reported its owners as at odds. The thing that injured it was plainly the yellow magazine of the McClure's type-a variety of magazine which surpassed it in the race for circulation by exaggerating and vulgarizing all its merits. Dr. Tassin seems to think, with William Archer, that S. S. McClure was the inventor of this type, but the truth is that its real father was the unknown originator of the Sunday supplement. What Dr. Mc-Clure did was to apply the sensational methods of the cheap newspaper to a new and cheap magazine. Yellow journalism was rising and he went in on the tide. Hearst was getting on his legs at the same time, and I daresay that the muck-raking magazines, even in their palmy days, followed him a good deal more than they led him. McClure and the imitators of McClure borrowed his adept thumping of the tom-tom; Munsey and the imitators of Munsey borrowed his mush. McClure's and Everybody's, even when they had the whole nation by the ears, did little save repeat in solemn, awful tones what Hearst had said before. As for Munsey's at the height of its circulation, it was little more than a Sunday "magazine section" on smooth paper, and with somewhat clearer half-tones than Hearst could print. Nearly all the genuinely original ideas of these magazine Napoleons of yesteryear turned out badly. John Brisben Walker, with the Cosmopolitan, tried to make his magazine a sort of national university, and it went to pot. Ridgway, of Everybody's, planned a weekly to be published in a dozen cities simultaneously, and lost a fortune trying to establish McClure, facing a situation to be described presently, couldn't manage it, and his magazine got away from him. As for Munsey, there are many wrecks behind him; he is forever experimenting boldly and failing gloriously. Even his claim to have invented the all-fiction magazine is open to caveat; there were probably plenty of such things, in substance if not in name, before the Argosy. Hearst, the teacher of them all, now openly holds the place that belongs to him. He has galvanized the

corpse of the old *Cosmopolitan* into a gigantic success, he has distanced all rivals with *Hearst's*, he has beaten the English on their own ground with *Nash's*, and he has rehabilitated various lesser magazines. More, he has forced the other magazine publishers to imitate him. A glance at *McClure's* today offers all the proof that is needed of his influence.

Dr. Tassin halts his story at its most interesting point, for he says nothing of what has gone on since 1900-and very much has gone on since 1900. For one thing, the Ladies' Home Journal has seen the rise of a swarm of imitators, many of them very prosperous. For another thing, the all-fiction magazine of Munsey et al. has degenerated into so gaudy a confection that Munsey must blush every time he thinks of it. And for a third thing, the muckrake magazine has blown up, and is no more. Why this last? Have all the likely candidates been muckraked? Is there no longer a taste for scandal in the vulgar? I have heard endless discussion of these questions and many ingenious answers, but all of them fail to answer. In this emergency I offer one not hitherto put forward. It is this: that the muckrake magazines came to grief, not because the public tired of muckraking, but because muckraking succeeded. That is to say, the villains so long belabored by the Steffenses, the Tarbells and the Phillipses were eventually all deprived of their old power, and in their places sweet and virtuous reformers were set up. The muckrake magazines, having bellowed for the setting up of these reformers, were now compelled to praise and anoint them-and the public straightway lost interest in the matter. And why? Simply because the public always gags at praise. What it wants is denunciation. It delights in scandal, cannonading, whooping, a good show. It chortled and read on when Aldrich, Boss Cox, John D. Rockefeller and the other bugaboos of the muckrakers were being beaten to death; it promptly sickened when Ben B. Lindsey, Jane Ad-

dams and the rest of the brummagem saints began to be hymned. believe, is the true cause of the decay of the muckraking magazines; it was not that they muckraked too long, but that they stopped muckraking altogether. Hearst has never fallen into any such error; he takes on a new bugaboo the moment an old one grows wobbly; he never commits the folly of praising anyone, save perhaps himself. It astonishes me that he has never embraced the opportunity so plainly before him. Why doesn't he start a magazine devoted to muckraking the muckrakers?

§ 2

Condensation is carried to such a fine point in "The Creative Will," by Willard Huntington Wright (Lane), that the reader long accustomed to the stuffed and flabby books of commerce will probably find it as strange a fare as caffeine C.P. or ninety-eight per cent. alcohol. A whole æsthetic theory is here reduced to 251 paragraphs, and some of them are so short that they are little more than apothegms. for all that relentless conciseness, the ideas of the author are stated with the utmost clarity, and many of them are ideas which penetrate to the heart of a much-belabored and very difficult subject. It will be curious to see what the orthodox art critics make of the volume. In it all of their pretty generalities and sentimentalities are thrown overboard, and an effort is made to set up standards of beauty that are, to some extent at least, scientific and exact. Here and there the very sweep of theory is apt to knock the reader off his feet, and make him reach out desperately for the criteria demolished, but on the whole it must be granted that Mr. Wright establishes his notions with excellent plausibility and address, and that his work rises immeasurably above the feeble, impressionistic twaddle that passes for art criticism in the United States. He may be wrong in details, but he is headed the right way, and the

amount of hard and original thinking that he has got into this small volume is really quite amazing. There is material in it, given the usual style of wordy writing, for a dozen books of its size.

Readers of the author's former work, "Modern Painting" (Lane), know the general direction of his ideas in the matter of the graphic arts. It is his contention, in brief, that the programme in painting or sculpture is just as false and befogging a thing as the programme in music, and that its seductions are responsible for most of the confusion which reigns in æsthetic discussion. Practically the whole of contemporary art criticism is corrupted by this pre-occupation with non-æs-. thetic significances. Such a picture as Millet's "The Angelus," for example, is commonly estimated, not by the æsthetic reactions it awakens, but by the sentimental emotions it evokes. It is pretty, it is pious, it is sweet, it is affecting. Saying so much, its admirers think that they have also said that it is a great work of art. But the truth is that a work of art must stand or fall by quite different standards, which have nothing whatever to do with sweetness, or piety, or mere prettiness. It may be, in fact, quite devoid of any representative meaning or associative suggestion, and still make a powerful appeal to the sense of beauty. And it may, on the contrary, arouse the emotions like a bugle call, and yet be as inconsiderable æsthetically as the wallpaper in a hotel room. In music it is easier to find examples than in painting, for music has been better emancipated from mere illustration than any other art, despite the continued existence of the slum area of opera. Brahms' Fourth Symphony has no sentimental significance; it is empty of all piety, patriotism and amour; it represents no object or idea; it symbolizes no recognizable emotion. And yet, as everyone knows, it is a superb work of art, and its appeal to the æsthetic centers is almost overpowering. Contrariwise. Sibelius' "Finlandia" awakens the

emotions like a call to arms. In it there is revolt, heroism, the cry of an oppressed people; it stirs the heart as effectively as Schubert's "Ständchen" caresses the lachrymal glands. And yet, at bottom, it is a cheap and insignificant piece of work, without either novelty in design or ingenuity in execution. It belongs, in brief, to that debased and sentimentalized order of art of which "The Angelus" is a prime example, just as Brahms' symphony belongs to that pure and noble order of which Michelangelo's "Slave" is a prime example.

But if a work of art is not to be judged by its emotional or intellectual content, then what standards are we to apply to it? It is Mr. Wright's business in his book to answer this question, and he has carried the condensation of his answer to such a point that it would be folly to try to condense it further. He begins by describing the elements of æsthetic response as they appear in bodily movements and impulses, and he proceeds to show how these movements and impulses tend to fall into rhythms, and how these rhythms are synchronized into complex and yet coherent designs. First setting forth the nature and effect of such simple one-dimensional designs as the unaccompanied melody and of such two-dimensional designs as the flat drawing, he enters upon a detailed discussion of those larger forms which occupy three dimensions, and of the arrangement and inter-relations of their parts. As I say, it would be impossible to summarize this discussion clearly. Disdaining superficialities, it strikes down into the very heart of the æsthetic problem. It is painting, of course, that chiefly interests the author. His most original and convincing contributions are to the question of composition on flat surfaces, and to that of color, particularly as a means of overcoming the flatness. But he draws upon all the arts to reinforce his arguments, and he displays a wide and sound knowledge of their aims and difficulties. The book, indeed, is packed with penetrating reflections, shrewd judgments and arresting turns of thought and phrase. It lifts itself vastly above the common run of critical works. It is an attempt to get down to the fundamentals of æsthetic form and organization, and of æsthetic response no less, and I commend it to all who see in art more than a mere reinforcement of sentiment. It blows a clean wind through the fogs and obfuscations of the immemorial pundits.

8 3

It is not sufficient to pile praises upon Frank J. Wilstach's "Dictionary of Similes" (Little-Brown); I am almost tempted to the indecency of greeting it with three cheers. The motto on the title page, out of George Moore's "Vale," tells the story. "It is hard," says George, plaintively, "to find a simile when one is seeking for one." Hard is far too mild and empty a word. Make it cruel, horrible, damnable, scheusslich. Who, putting words to-gether to the glory of God, has not been halted, tortured, stumped by the quest? Who, living by the apt and savoury phrase, has not searched the libraries and the second-hand book-stores for a dictionary of similes as good as Soule's dictionary of synonyms-and all in vain? And who, of all this harassed clan, will not fall upon the fat volume of Dr. Wilstach with joy? It is the fruit, one need not be told in the preface, of years and years of labor-of meticulous snouting into endless books, of herculean searches for authorities, of truly staggering sorting, weighing and indexing. All the known and unknown similes in all the European tongues seem to be there, from such common ones as "as hard as nails" and "as hot as the hinges of hell" to such rare flowers of fancy as Irvin Cobb's "no more privacy than a goldfish"surely one of the most pungent similes ever devised. The learned thesaurist has swept the whole field of English literature, from Malory to Wallace Irwin, and has borrowed in addition

from the literatures of many other countries. Shakespeare and the Bible contribute thousands of specimens; hundreds come from Balzac, Byron, Emerson, Rabelais, Carlyle, Kipling. Swinburne seems to have been a fertile maker of similes: his name appears very often. So does that of Thomas Moore. So does that of Oliver Wendell Holmes. Many familiar specimens, of course, are credited to Anon.; they go back, in some cases, to the childhood of the race. But many others have been tracked to their sources. "As flat as a pancake," it appears, was first used by Ludvig Holberg, the father of modern Danish literature. who lived in the early eighteenth century. "Lean as a lath" is credited to Thomas Heywood, the contemporary of Shakespeare. "Fleet as an arrow" is first found in a poem by Firdausi, a Persian poet of the tenth century. "As happy as the day is long" comes from an old Scotch proverb. "As high as heaven" is from the Bible. So is "as hot as an oven." "As merry as a marriage bell" is out of Byron. "As mild as a dove" is from Shakespeare.

Very few similes in anything approaching general use seem to have been missed. One that I note is "as sound as a bell." Another is "as fresh as a fish," which is very common in Northern Europe, and is to be encountered in the first act of "A Doll's House." But these omissions, as I say, are not many. Dr. Wilstach has done his work with relentless thoroughness; his nets have dredged all the oceans. Moreover, he has arranged his specimens according to a handy and intelligent plan, so that they may be consulted with the minimum of labor. Finally, he has added a learned and interesting preface upon the history of similes in all ages, and has digested and summarized the scant literature of the subject. Altogether, a book of such obvious value that it needs no encomium. In six months every aspiring author will have it at his elbow. Need I say that the gifted author is a native of Indiana, the Attica of our fair republic? And need I add that his work has been long in circulation in manuscript among the literary genii of that super-literate commonwealth? Indianapolis should rear a shaft to him in the shank of Main Street, and keep it bathed in roses and lilies forever.

84

The novels of the autumn, in the main, are so dull that I can't get through them. A brilliant exception is "Somewhere in Red Gap," by Harry Leon Wilson (Doubleday-Page), an extension of the chronicles of that "Ma" Pettingill who was a saucy and Molièresque figures in "Ruggles of Red Gap." Mr. Wilson is one of the few living American novelists who actually know how to write. Seduced, like all the rest, by the cheap magazines, he yet manages to keep from stooping to their level. Instead, he pulls them up to The comic novel, perhaps the most difficult of all novels to write, is his oyster. He concocts it with the most amazing skill; he gets genuine characters into it; he makes it a work of art. You will go wrong, indeed, if you miss the hard merit of his "Somewhere in Red Gap." . . . But what other fictioneer comes near it? Alas, it is hard to find one. Machine-made situations, wooden characters, hollow bosh and rhodomontade, feeble sentimentality—little else is to be encountered in such trade goods as "The Wall Street Girl," by Frederick Orin Bartlett (Houghton); "The Power-House," by John Buchan (Doran); "Miss Theodosia Heartstrings," by Annie Hamilton Donnell (Little-Brown); "The Breath of the Dragon," by A. H. Fitch (Putnam); "The Hampstead Mystery," by Watson and Rees (Lane); "The Daughter Pays," by Mrs. Baillie Reynolds (Doran); and "The Tortured Soul," by Estelle Z. Huselton (Sherman-French). The very names of most of these tales give them away. And if the names were not enough, there would be the canned reviews and the pictures on the slip covers-chromatic portraits of homeric heroes and startlingly beautiful heroines, scenes of hair-raising dramas, sugary sentiment in wash. As for me, I find reading them a hard business. If you are interested in them, better subscribe for the New York *Times*.

Nor do I get very far into such things as "The Average Woman," by W. Dane Bank (Doran); "From the Housetops," by George Barr Mc-Cutcheon (Dodd-Mead); "The Towers of Ilium," by Ethelyn Leslie Huston (Doran); "Pincus Hood," by Arthur Hodges (Small-Maynard); "To the Minute," by Anna Katherine Green (Putnam); "The Sins of the Children," by Cosmo Hamilton (Little-Brown); "The Triumph of Tim," by Horace Annesley Vachell (Doran); "The Cross of Heart's Desire," by Gertrude Pahlow (Duffield); "Skinner's Dress Suit," by Henry Irving Dodge (Houghton), and "The Wandering Dog," by Marshall Saunders (Doran). Here there is better writing than in the worst, but after all, only better writing. One searches in vain for an idea, a new point of view, an arresting method of approach. It is all commonplace, usual, empty, tedious. A hundred such novels would not be worth one "Mc-Teague," or one "Heart of Darkness," or even one volume of fables by George Ade.

I offer you a few better things, but without enthusiasm: "Love and Lucy," by Maurice Hewlett (Dodd-Mead); "Barnacles," by J. MacDougall Hay (Doran); "Olga Bardel," by Stacy Aumonier (Century), a very promising first novel by a writer introduced to America by The SMART Set; "Leather-Face," by the Baroness Orczy (Doran); "The Beloved Son," by Fanny Kemble Johnson (Small-Maynard); "The Green Alleys," by Eden Philpotts (Macmillan); "The Romance of Martin Connor," a brisk tale of adventure by Oswald Kendall, a newcomer (Houghton-Mifflin); "Dead Yesterday," by Mary Agnes Hamilton (Doran), and "Mr. Britling Sees It Through," by H. G. Wells, (Macmil-

lan.) The Wells story, a tale of the war, is much better than most of the other things he has done of late, but it still falls far below "Tono-Bungay" and "The History of Mr. Polly." "Dead Yesterday," another war story, is perhaps the best of the whole lot. There is some bad writing in it, but there is at least no cheap sentimentality. The Hewlett book makes one weep for the old days of "The Forest Lovers" and "Brazenose the Great." The new Locke novel, "The Wonderful Year," makes one reach despairingly for the hemlock. The rest is silence...

§ 5

Christmas books begin to show themselves in such endless number that it is quite impossible to notice all of them, or even the twentieth of them. I pass over the cheap things for the department-store trade, with their banal texts, their quasi-leather bindings and their hotel decorations, and reach expectantly into the pile of more appetizing works. The first volume to reward the prehensile digit is "The Mystery of the Hated Man," by James Montgomery Flagg (Doran), a collection of capital comic pictures, with indifferent humor filling the spaces between them. Mr. Flagg, I fear, will never stagger humanity at the typewriter; the play of his fancy is reminiscent of all the barber-shop weeklies that ever were; he seldom achieves a wheeze that is new, or squeezes fresh juices from an old But when he turns from writing to drawing he is immediately full of a lively and genuine jocosity. His pictures have measurably mitigated the horrors of my existence. I offer his little book as a good one to present to that estimable gentleman of God, your pastor . . . The next tome that emerges from the bin would probably cause him to lift an evebrow and cock an ear, but all the same I venture to guess that it would give him no small delight in secret. It is "The Fighting Man," by William A. Brady (Bobbs-Merrill), the manager of Jim Corbett

and of many theatrical troupes. The volume, in a sense, is an apology for the author's life. He seeks to make it clear that fate rather than inclination turned him to the prize-ring; his private tastes, he says, run to dramatic art in its loftier phases, and particularly to Shakespeare. But all this, after all, is beside the point. The simple fact is that Mr. Brady managed his sluggers with the greatest skill and gusto, and that his retirement was a great loss to an ancient and noble sport. He tells his story in a vivacious manner, and it

is well worth reading.

Various other likely Christmas books show themselves, among them "Midsummer Motoring in Europe," by De Courcey W. Thom (Putnam); "Beethoven: the Man and the Artist," by Friedrich Kerst (Huebsch); "Told by the Sandman," by Abbie Phillips Walker (Harper). Mr. Thom's charming chronicle makes a welcome break in the stream of war books by college boys, trained nurses, connoisseurs of atrocities and out-of-work English novelists, for it deals with the Europe that blew up in August, 1914, and so there is something of the romance of history in it. His tour took him through Belgium, Normandy, Brittany, Switzerland and South Germany, and he seems to have paused very often to buy photographs, for he presents a great many good ones. Unluckily, he also appears to have wasted a lot of time writing poetry, and some of it he rashly prints.

"Told by the Sandman" is an excellent collection of little stories to be read aloud to children. Mrs. Walker has written hundreds of these tales during the past five or six years, and they have attained to an enormous popularity in a syndicate of newspapers. They are simple enough to lie within the comprehension of a child too young to read itself, and yet there is a constant ingenuity in them, and they do not cover the ground of the classical fairy stories. It is surprising that they were not put into book covers

sooner. . . .



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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of September, 1916.

[SEAL.]

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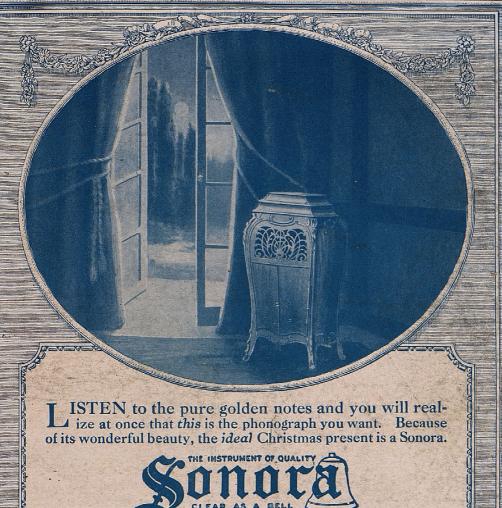
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